

PAPER MAYHEM™

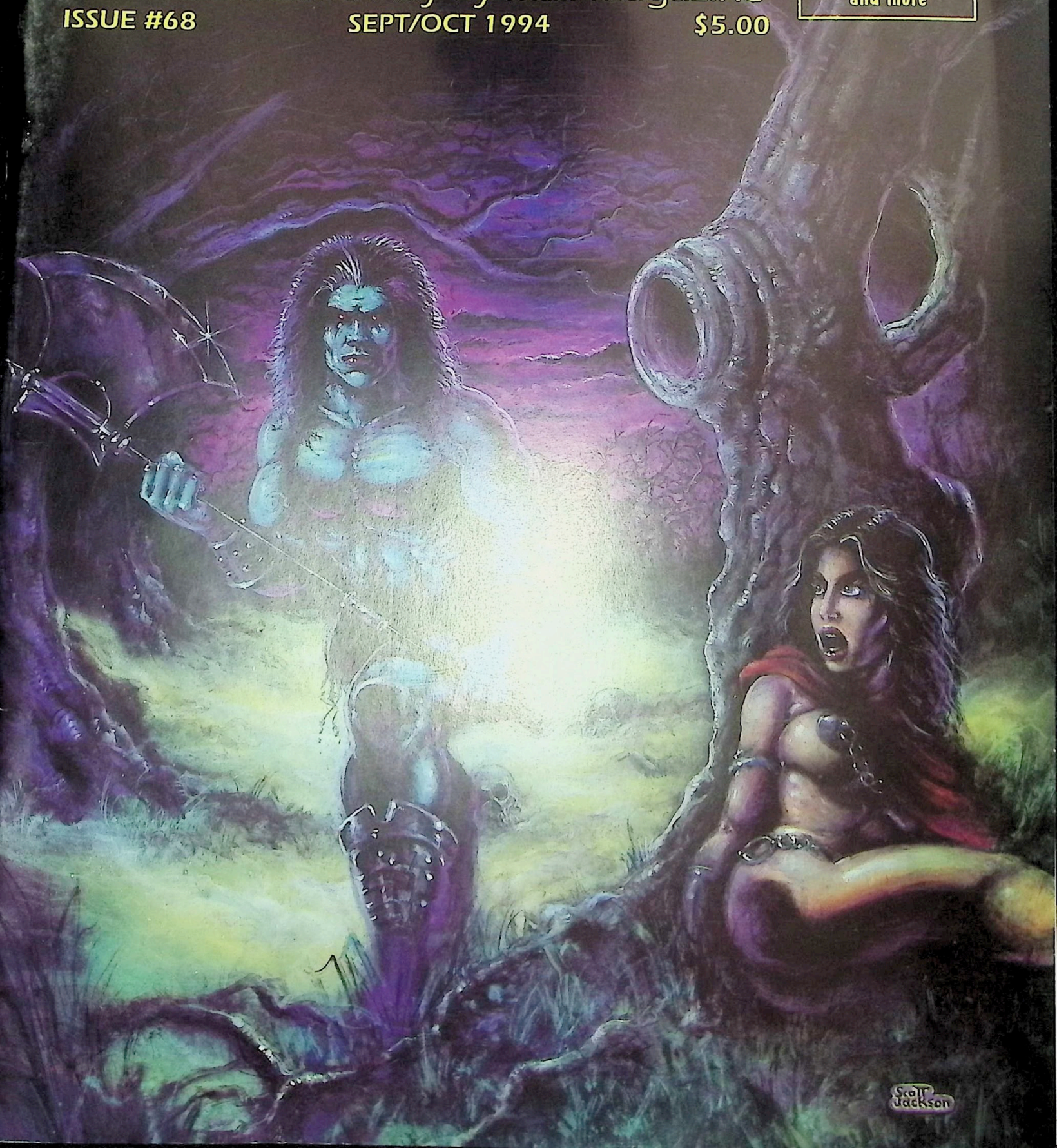
"The Informative Play-By-Mail Magazine"

ISSUE #68

SEPT/OCT 1994

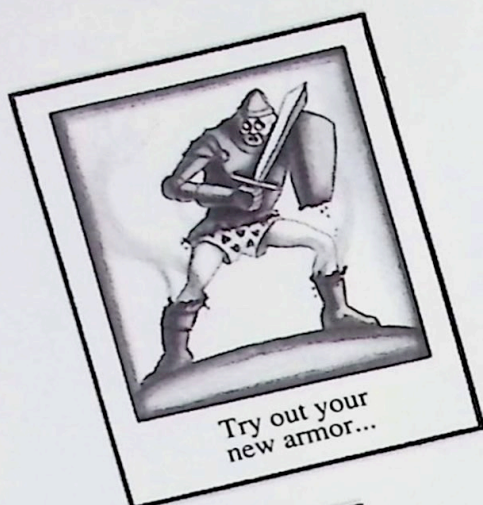
\$5.00

INSIDE!
Adventurers Guild
Kavernes
Phoenix
and more

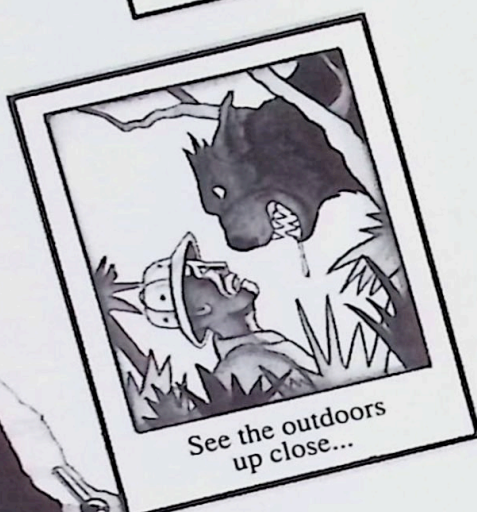
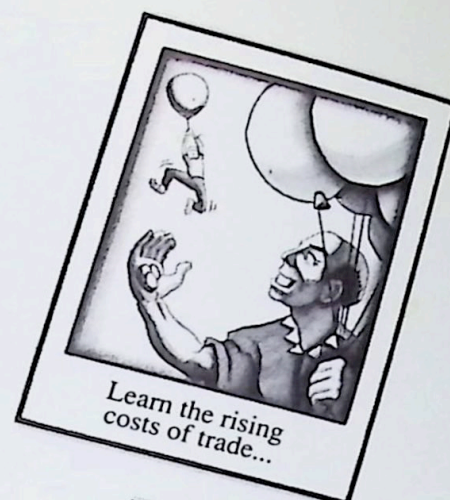


Scott
Jackson

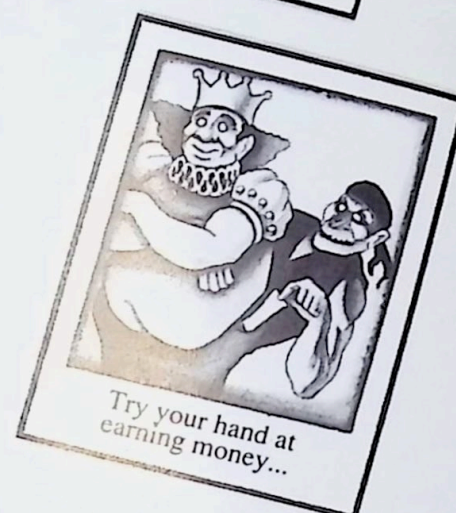
OUT TIME DAYS



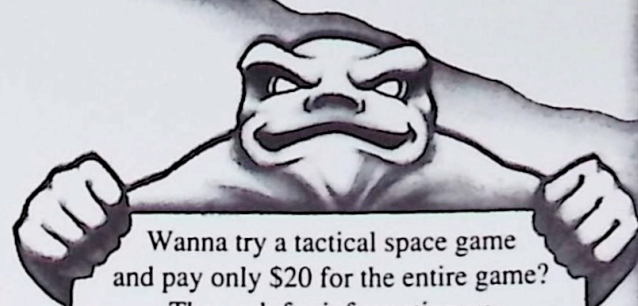
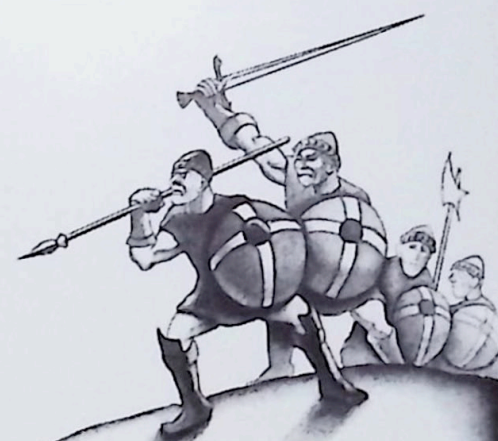
Out Time Days is a Play-By-Mail game of life on a strange world. Emphasizing role-playing and inter-player communication, OTD is a game for those who like to join with other players around the world in figuring out puzzles, creating working economies, exploring large sections of worlds, undertaking or tracking criminal activities, or fielding capable armies. The worlds explored are living, vibrant locales that will change through your character's actions.



With the ability to journey in many eras (you'll start in a medieval-like location), you'll enjoy adapting to new sets of abilities and restraints or you can focus on a single place and become well established. OTD is a combination Science Fiction-Fantasy game. It is 99% computer moderated to insure fairness, and 1% GM moderated to allow for creativity. A maximum of 1 turn per week is allowed. Cost per turn is \$5.00. The game is open-ended with each new character playing a vital role. A special startup is available if you mention this ad. Receive a rulebook, startup turn and 5 turns for just \$5.00 (a \$35.00 value!).



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ISSUE #68
September/October 1994

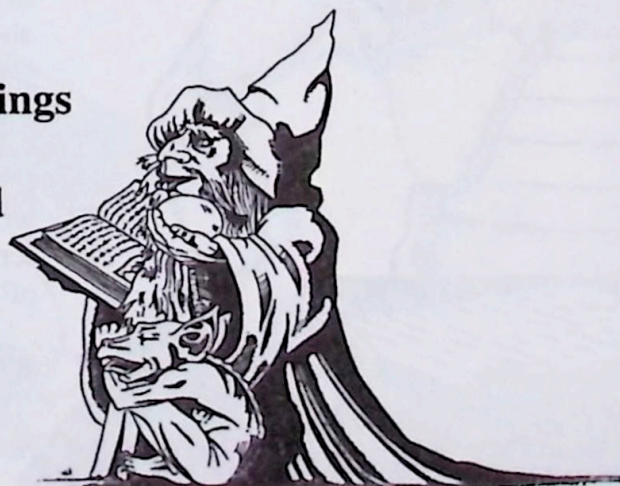
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COMING IN NEXT ISSUE

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Guts Across the
Galaxy
- Smuggler's Run
- Tracks
& More!

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Where We're Heading...

This is our annual full color cover issue. I hope that you enjoy seeing some color on **Paper Mayhem** like I do. Scott Jackson has done another fine job for us. It will be hard to come out with the next issue, single color again, BIG difference. Maybe one of these days we could come out with every issue in full color.

Scott Jackson also has done the cover for the 8th edition of the *Journal of the PBM Gamer*. Stop by **Paper Mayhem's** booth at either **GenCon** or **AndCon** and pick up a copy. If you are unable to attend, you can purchase the 8th edition *Journal of the PBM Gamer* from **Paper Mayhem** for \$4.00

As a reminder **Paper Mayhem** will be at **GenCon** August 18-21 in Milwaukee and of course **AndCon** September 15-18 in Independence, OH. Elaine and I hope to see you at both of them!

In last issue's column I mentioned that I was out of work. Well that has changed and I am now working for an-

other printer. I guess I can't keep it out of my blood.

The thing about my new job is that the printer prints election ballots. Because of this, it may be hard to reach me until the general election is over in November. Elaine will probably be doing a lot more work and relaying messages to me. This is just a warning if you don't hear from me right away (but what's new).

A note was received from Issac Cates, who runs **Sceptre**. Issac has been accepted into Yale University's Ph.D. program in English and will not have much time to run **Sceptre**. Richard Persky, an experienced **Sceptre** player will be taking over the reins running the game. This changeover is taking place and will be in effect by mid-August.

Werner Freitas of **Twin Engine Gaming** has informed me that he will no longer be running **Space Combat**. But he is bring out a new game called **Death By Starlight**, which debuted at **Origins**.

Russ Norris of **Rolling Thunder Games** informed me that they will no longer be running **Warriors & Wizards**. They will finish the games of **Warriors & Wizards** that they are currently running, but will not be starting any new games. So, **Roma Games** may be licensing **Warriors & Wizards** to someone else now.

Speaking more about **Origins**, Duane Wilcoxson of **Advanced Gaming Enterprises** has sent me some pictures that he took there. The pictures will be appearing in the next issue of **Paper Mayhem**. The batch of pictures that Duane sent has some moderators that haven't appeared before in **Paper Mayhem**. If any of you are attending a gaming convention and by chance take any pictures of PBM moderators, feel free to send them in, maybe you will have some new moderator pictures too.

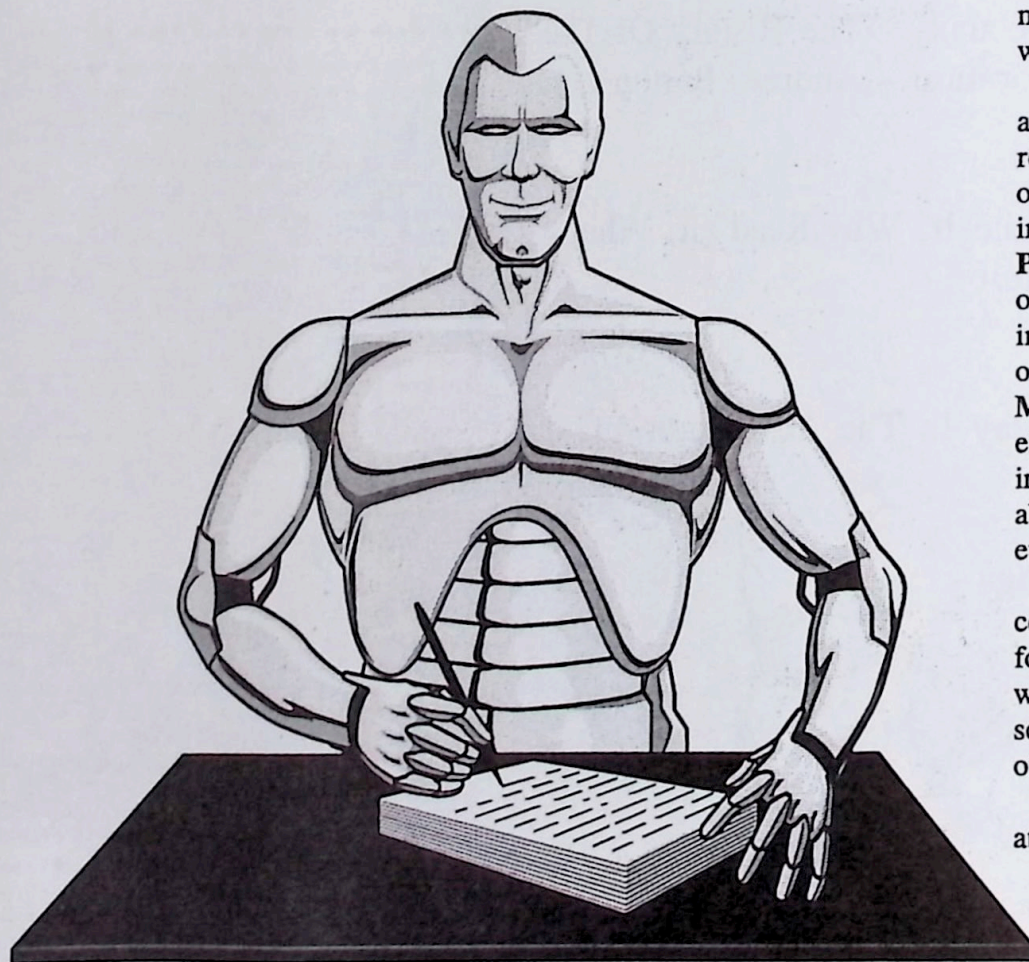
And finally, I have been trying to find out the **Origin Award** winners in the PBM categories. **Illuminati** by **Flying Buffalo** won for Best PBM Game for the 5th time. I was unable to find out what PBM game won Best New PBM Game after numerous phone calls. You will have to wait until the next issue to find out.

The following notice is being put in again with this issue, since I got a good response from the last issue. I am always on the lookout for those of you that are interested in doing some writing for **Paper Mayhem**. To cover everything out on the market is almost next to impossible without the help from those of you that submit something to **Paper Mayhem**. If you are interested in writing either send me a letter or call. If you are in a game, go ahead and write something about it and send it in. Anything and everything is appreciated.

The writers are compensated by receiving subscriptions to **Paper Mayhem** for the articles that are used. Some writers even give their credited subscription for writing an article to friends of theirs who are nonsubscribers.

Well that's about all for now. See you at **GenCon** and/or **AndCon**...

David Webber
Editor



LEGENDS

Midnight Games introduces The North Island Campaign!
The newest LEGENDS game module.

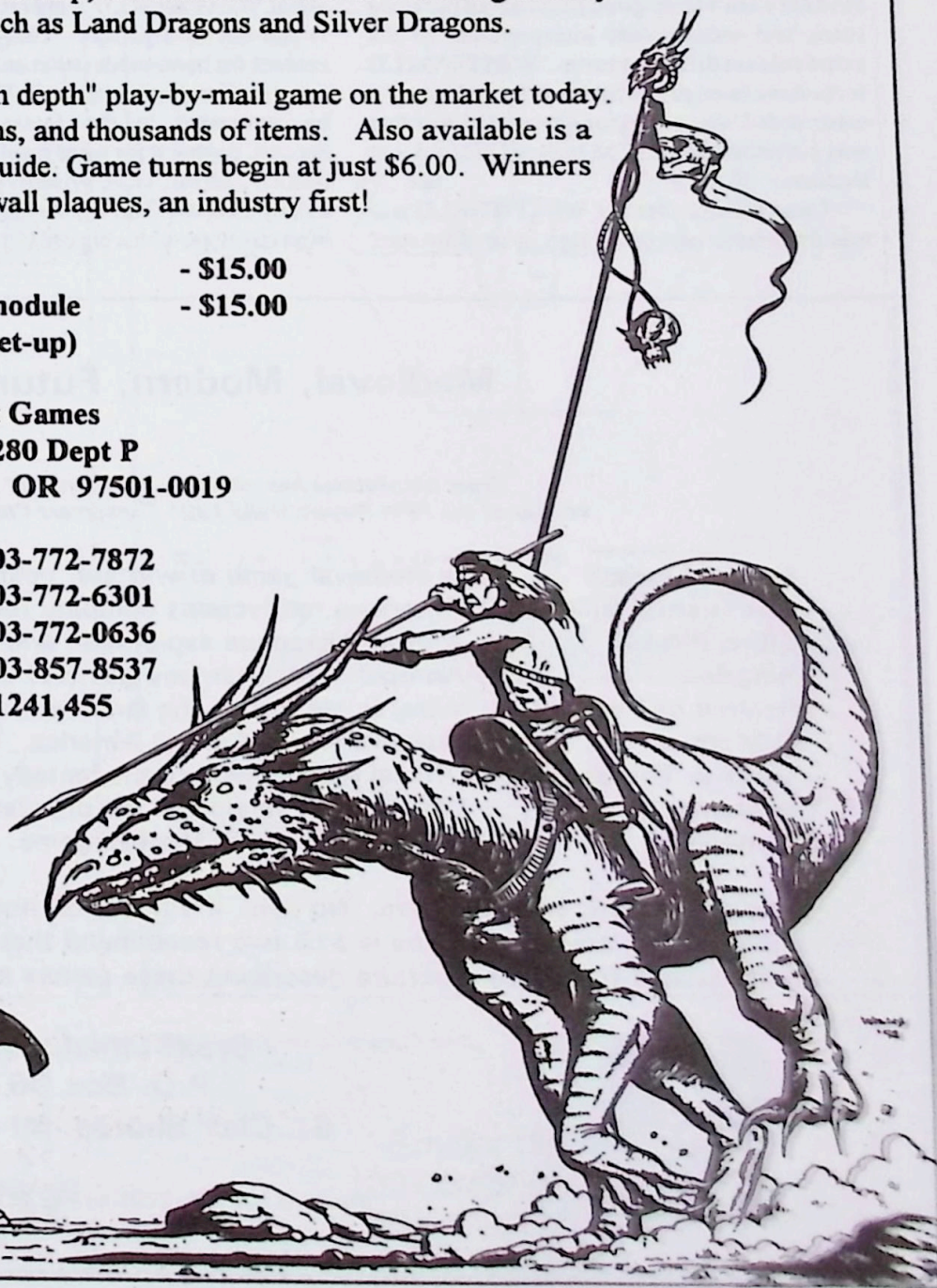
The North Island Campaign offers the most detailed **LEGENDS** module to date. New racial choices include Saurians, Maratasens, Giants, Halflings, Centaur Nomads, Gargoyle Barbarians, Troll Barbarians, Giant Barbarians and dozens of others. Over one thousand new and never before seen items, ten new religions, new game map, revised common items including cavalry saber and cutlass and new mounts such as Land Dragons and Silver Dragons.

The **LEGENDS** game system is the most "in depth" play-by-mail game on the market today. Each game offers 5000 NPC's and locations, and thousands of items. Also available is a new player Mentor system and a Players guide. Game turns begin at just \$6.00. Winners receive Heraldic shield wall plaques, an industry first!

LEGENDS Rules	- \$15.00
North Island Campaign module	- \$15.00
(includes color map and set-up)	

Reply to: **Midnight Games**
PO Box 280 Dept P
Medford OR 97501-0019

Game Info #	503-772-7872
New Player info #	503-772-6301
Fax #	503-772-0636
BBS #	503-857-8537
Compuserve #	71241,455



WESTWORD

A MINI REVIEW

By John C. Muir

WESTWORD is a Cowboys and Indians Wild West role-playing game that harks back to the Golden Age of PBM. The "Golden Age" was when GMs ran a game as a labor of love instead of a source of income, turns were hand-moderated by the same person month after month and you explored the game system with the GM instead of exploring a program with his or her programmer. So far, I haven't seen the downside of that format in WESTWORD. Problems with that type of game used to be the processing delays when real life intruded for the GM, errors because the GM didn't keep good notes about previous turns and inconsistent interpretation of the same rule on different turns. WESTWORD turns have been processed rapidly and the only error noted was one wrong terrain report that was corrected by the GM before I entered that location.

I was a playtester for WESTWORD and was impressed enough to sign up at game start

with the same character (but reset stats). In both games, I have played an Indian who had avoided the settlements and explored the hinterlands. I am setting up a review position that will stay in, or move between, the towns and will be able to say more about player interactions after that. On the last playtest turn my character found the mysterious Valley of the Stallions. The writeup for the turn was so good that my character has visions of locating it again, but I am much further away from it this time.

There are a few things that are unusual about WESTWORD's operations. First, it is run out of a prison. That is one of the reasons for hand-moderation and hand-written turn result narratives and why the game won't be automated in the foreseeable future. Second, payment for turns must be made to an outside address, since prisoners can't receive money directly. Third, your turn results come in an envelope with a big red stamp on the back

saying that it is from a State Prison and the Department of Corrections has no liability for the contents. But, if you cared what the neighbors think, you wouldn't subscribe to Paper Mayhem or get mail with really strange logos, would you?

WESTWORD's prices are moderate. Basic turns are \$2.50 and you can write up to two Certain Orders each turn at an extra cost of \$1.00 each. Certain Orders are for initiating combat, for recruiting and maintaining a group of subordinate warriors/gunslingers, for starting or operating a business and for visiting a Cathouse. I haven't tried any Certain Orders yet, and probably won't try the last one because my mail gets rifled by teenage mutant female gamers before I get home. There is no minimum number of turns per month that must be played, but turns for a character must be at least ten days apart, so the maximum is three a month. A rulebook costs \$2.00, but a Rulebook and a four turn credit is only \$10.00,

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- Kings & Things* . . . Official pbm version of the fantasy board game. Voted BEST PBM in 1989. \$1
- Supremacy Official pbm version of the popular contemporary world conquest game. \$1
- Gameplan Pbm American pro football game. Ask for a *free turn* to see if you like it! \$1

Rulebook prices shown above. No risk: if you decide not to play, return the rules for a full refund. Entry fee for any game game is \$15 (we recommend that you read the rules before you ask to play). Write or call for a free brochure describing these games and a complete game price list.



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Welcome to Outpost

Outpost is a game of inter-stellar manufacturing and distribution. As CEO of your company, you are competing against nine other players that are scattered around the 50 planets of the galaxy. Each player starts on their home planet complete with sales office, assembly plant, warehouse, and factory. As a corporate leader, you will have to decide whether to devote your resources to economic development, military and strategic deployment, or a subtle combination of the two.

Everything in your ever-growing empire requires one thing...

Credits III To keep the wheels of progress rolling, you will need to do what you do best, and that's manufacture goods. So build your ships, send them out to buy the raw materials, return them to your home planet, and pump out the finished goods as fast as your factory can produce 'em. There are 20 different finished goods that the planets will be asking for, and inherent pros and cons to producing each kind, so plan your marketing strategies well.

All player reports, maps, and graphs are printed in high-quality laser printed graphics so there never any need to try and decipher some Inscrutable cryptic codes to read the results of your turn. Simply look at the maps to see your ships, facilities, tanks, etc. and read your reports to see the results of all your orders.

Plus, all players that own an IBM compatible computer will get the Online software for receiving and submitting orders. The Online software, complete with pull-down menus, customizable colors, and help windows, even has an expense listing option to show you how many credits your currently entered orders will cost.

Outpost can be played on a 2 or 3 week turn around, so the pace can suit your gaming style. Turn costs are \$6.00 with no extra or hidden charges. New games start at \$12.00 and you will receive all game manuals, your first turn on diskette, all starting maps and charts, and your first 2 turns.

(The manuals can be purchased separately for \$5.00.)

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These are examples of just 2 of the many reports that you will receive each turn.

All game positions are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis.

To participate in the next game of Outpost, send your name, address and phone number along with a check or money order for \$12.00 to open your account. Also indicate if you wish to use the Online software, and if so, your preferred diskette size.

Spyder Games
1307 Sebring Circle
Elgin, IL 60120
(708) 468 9442

making the book free with a setup. Fees are sent to NLT Enterprises, 9422 Kieve Rd., Hubbard Lake, MI 49747, noting that they are Indian villages, ghost towns, trading posts, an outlaw's hideout, the Lost Valley's goldmine and the Valley of the Stallions. Towns have stores and special buildings like jails and banks (for safe deposit of valuables or robbing, depending on your motivation). Most Hand-Moderated Characters (HMCs) hang around the towns, mostly to provide the players with somebody to interact with when there are no other player characters around. HMCs can be a good source for special training for your character.

Playing WESTWORLD is very easy. This is a beer-and-pretzels game that doesn't get involved in math or coded input sheets. The turnsheet shows what your account balance and current possessions are. There are spaces to record movement. You can enter the sector coordinates that you are moving to, or just the direction of travel. Then there are spaces to enter up to five General Orders each turn. There are about seventy-five General Orders to choose from and they provide plenty of options. You can join an alliance, catch stray wild horses, catch a train (have a strong rope), pan for gold, blow up a building, shoot at targets, start a stampede, see a teacher, or (gasp) work in town. That takes care of the

front of the turnsheet.

On the back, there is room to write up to three Very Special Orders, the ones restricted to your character type. You can use these to improve the results of some General Orders. For example, as an Indian I have a VSO that I can combine with a General Order to Hunt for Furs that gives me a larger catch. Following that, there is a space to write up to two Certain Orders (that cost a dollar each) if you want combat, to start or run a business, or to recruit/maintain a gang. Then there is a space for two Einstein Orders, which is whatever you want to try to convince the GM that you should be able to do. This is where you can wing it and build your character's personality. Finally there is a space for comments to the GM. You can also use that space to answer Special Encounters that you received with the turn. My character woke up one night with two bear cubs going through my packs and mama visible nearby in the moonlight. Since the bear is my totem animal, I got up and walked to mama and asked her to please have her children leave my things along. It worked, but I don't recommend that palefaces try that line.

As of March, there were over fifty player positions filled and over 100 HMCs in the game, according to the Westworld Epitaph, the game newsletter. The most popular character type was the Gunslinger (8) and the least

popular the Bandito(1). Two player characters are on the Most Wanted list: Tyranthrax for Murder and Armed Robbery in connection with a stage robbery and Ten Bears for Murder. Two player characters were planted in Boot Hill, along with several HMCs.

I've enjoyed the game so far and will be trying to do more player interactions to get a feel for diplomacy and some of the General Orders that can only be done in towns. Service has been good and the GM's printing is very readable. The price is very reasonable for a hand-moderated game and I'm getting value for my money. My main worry is that it will become so successful that individual attention will decrease over time.

If you want a setup or rulebook send money to NLT Enterprises, then write to :

George Cameron 144586X 3-51T
William E Donaldson Corr. Facility
100 Warrior Lane
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GLOBAL SUPREMACY



Check out this exciting
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 - Turns can be submitted at any time for immediate evaluation by the Gamemaster.
 - Dozens upon dozens of different air, naval and land units can be built.
 - Extremely realistic battles for even the most complex of engagements.
- Combining years of experience with new innovations in gaming, Northwest Simulations announces the purchase of Schubel & Son, and now proudly presents Global Supremacy!

Initial set-up for Global Supremacy is FREE and includes all necessary materials. The rule book is \$15.00, and can be purchased separately. Turns are \$3.50 each. The average monthly turn costs are \$30.

KAVERNES REVIEW

By B. E. Wright

"You knelt down before the dark slick at the foot of the mattress. It had an oily sheen that feebly reflected the bedroom's twilight. There was something unusual here, and out of morbid curiosity you touched its surface. Surprisingly, none of the goo came off on your finger, but you noticed that it began to bubble as if being put to a slow boil. Clearly you had activated some unknown process..."

Picture yourself in a haunted house. Picture yourself WANTING to be there. Picture yourself looking for gold, treasure and wealth in the midst of horror, depravity, and many, many puzzles. If you are into riddle solving and don't mind playing solo, then Kavernes may be just the game for you.

Kavernes is the brainchild of Marguerite Dias, an experienced GM who also runs Cyberfringe and New Dawn. It is a computer-moderated role-playing game in which you play the part of a treasure seeker and mystery solver. You begin the game with eight numbered options. You may choose one to three options

(which include exploring rooms, talking to monsters, reading journals, etc.) for \$1.50, or four to six for \$3.00. You may also get a character summary with items and statistics for another \$1.50. Turnaround time is fast, usually between ten days and two weeks. There is absolutely no interaction with other characters; this is in many ways the ultimate solo game.

In Kavernes you begin at John Mouldy's Place, a beat up, smelly old farmhouse in the middle of nowhere. It is said to contain one or more entrances to the Kavernes, where treasures and danger await. Well, John Mouldy's Place also contains these things. Most of the players who've started are still in John Mouldy's Place, just because there's so much to do there. One of my two characters just died there, he was eaten by what looked like a giant bug. How humiliating...

The game itself is very dark and grim, as befits a horror PBM. Everywhere you look you find references to dark magics, demons

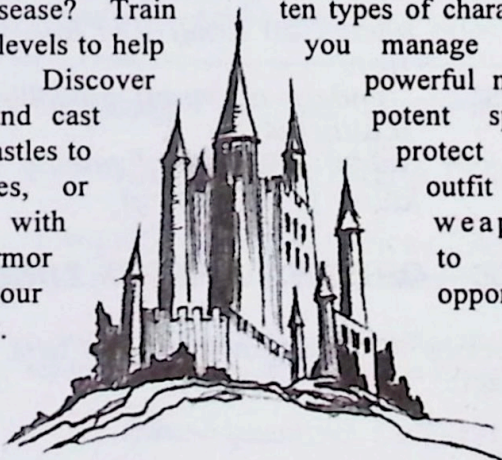
and other disgusting creatures, and the mysterious David Tavestock, a Vietnam vet and dark magician whose obsession with a woman named Monique kept me entertained for some weeks. The descriptions of people and places are descriptive to the point of distraction...

"Monique

She was beautiful: that was my first thought. She was dressed in reds and purples so dark that they were almost black, the fabric wrapped tightly around her upper body so as to seem both chaste, her ripeness bound and sealed, and, in the act of sealing, eroticized. The same paradox informed her features. Her hairline had been shaved back fully an inch, and her eyebrows fully removed, which left her face eerily innocent of expression. Yet her flesh gleamed as it oiled and though the shaving, and the absence of any scrap of makeup to flatter her features, seemed acts in defiance of her beauty, her face could not be denied its sensuality. Her mouth was too

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Nobody has neighbor problems like the inhabitants of the lands of **You Rule!**. The orcs hate the dwarves, the dwarves can't stand the trolls, the trolls detest the elves, and similar problems exist with the ogres and humans. In fact, each race has one other race that it rules over and one race that rules over it. This natural superiority translates to a distinct advantage in battle. In **You Rule!** you must use this advantage to your benefit. Build mighty forces to explore and conquer a vast continent where each province is unique. Will the next province you capture have a valuable gold mine or be infested with Dutch Elm Disease? Train ten types of characters to high levels to help you manage your realm. Discover powerful magic items and cast potent spells. Build castles to protect your provinces, or outfit your troops with weapons to take and armor to take over your territory.



Rules (applies towards setup): \$7.50
Setup: \$10

Turns: \$5.50 by U.S. mail or only
\$4.50 if you send it in by email
Pick a codename of 4-10 characters in
length to start.

L lucky Llama Games

80-Q North Cabrillo Highway
Box #226, Dept. P
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019-1667

Phone/Fax: (415) 712-0283
Internet: llucky@crl.com
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- Numerous different strategies can win
- Accumulate rating points for each game you complete
- Receive a free setup and Turn One for each game you complete!
- 100% computer moderated
- No hidden costs
- Setup includes Turn One
- Ask about private games with no added charges

sculpted; and her eyes--umber one moment, gold the next--too eloquent for the feelings to be disguised.

How could I forget Monique."

How indeed. This writing style is typical of Kavernes, Marguerite always uses six words when two will do. But the overall effect wraps the reader up in the mystery that is David and the House and the Kavernes all in one. And the plot lines...suffice to say that after a year in the Kavernes I've only scratched the surface. There is NO WAY that two characters can follow the same path of options for any length of time (after the first turn or two, of course). When you start reading a journal, for example, you might go through ten or fifteen consecutive turns of using one of your options to read the next entry, then the next, then the next...and its like this for all of the other paths too. Start exploring a room, any room, and you might have to choose fifty related options before you've done everything you could possibly do there.

On rare occasions you might find that you want to do something Marguerite didn't list. For example, when I was exploring a musty bedroom (not the one with the oily slick) I saw some mirror shards in a corner. I decided to pick them up. This special action cost me \$5.00 but Marguerite not only let me do it but she came up with a whole new sequence of normal price actions, because in John

Mouldy's Place nothing--not even a broken mirror--is exactly what it seems.

Since I had a character die last week, I now know that if you die you have the option of returning the same character at the same place and time that he expired (Did I mention there's a time travel theme in this place? Its eerie). Anyway if you do you lose all acquired character points...

Speaking of character points, character generation is very simple. There are 9 statistics. These are beauty, courage, elan, intelligence, luck, power, quickness, resilience and stamina. What each of these does, I'm not exactly sure. You allocate 99 character points to these characteristics any way you like. I've learned that power doubles as "hit points" so don't skip here. During play your characteristics will change, usually up in increments of 0.1, but some characteristics are easier to get than others. For me intelligence has proven to be the easiest to increase--just read books and journals--and beauty the hardest. How each statistic affects turn results is impossible to determine. I was running two characters, one very smart and one very dumb. Whenever they performed the same option, the printout was the same for both, so its possible that intelligence plays no real role. I don't know.

For each turn, each option has a specific response on a separate sheet of paper. This

makes it convenient to file options in numerical order. You also get a summary sheet listing what actions you requested and a personal note from Marguerite. This is nice, it really personalizes what could be viewed as a very impersonal game. It also lists your account balance, and its nice to see how slowly it drops!

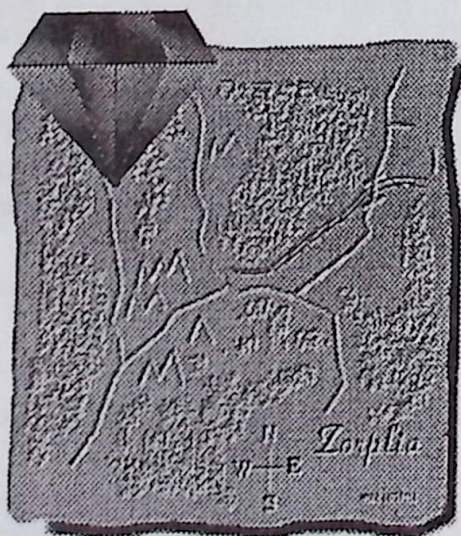
If I have any problem with Kavernes, its that sometimes it gets too verbose. My remaining character has an intelligence of 4 and so far I've avoided any actions that could increase it. Instead I'm in the middle of a fight with a ghoul. So far Mr. Brick has smashed his head in, but STILL the thing won't shut up! Arrgghh....

Conclusion. Like Murder!, Kavernes is a good crossover game. My wife and I play this game together, and I can assure you that she is no fan of PBM games in general. The general horror genre used in Kavernes is almost unique in PBM gaming, right off hand I can't think of another game out there like it. Since I've never ever had a problem with my turn, I don't know if customer service would be bad or not, but who cares as long as it doesn't come up? All in all, Kavernes is a very nice game. I recommend it.

For more information, contact:

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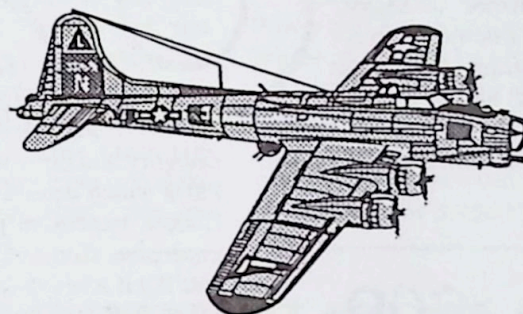
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HINTS ON RESEARCH IN SEEDS OF DESTRUCTION

By Jim Eckert

Seeds of Destruction is a new closed-ended space conquest game. At the center of the game is researching new technologies. This is not a process of moving from "Tech 1" to "Tech 2". It is a more detailed, and therefore a more complicated process. This article will help players new to the game develop a research strategy.

The importance of research can be seen from a couple of examples. At the start of the game, an engine that will give you a decent fast transport costs 30 Basic Units of Commerce (BUCs). This is after you've reduced its cost as far as you can. How about an engine three times faster for ten BUCs? The good armor is heavy, making you choose between maneuverable ships or armored ships. How about both, with an armor that has zero mass (so low that it has no effect on maneuverability)? Research can get you these things, and sooner than you'd expect.

A brief overview of the game system is needed to understand research for those who have not played. All ships (except your first Scout) are designed by the player. Ship Design is accomplished by choosing Parts.

neighbor has spent his

income on weaponry and fallen behind in expansion, your much bigger economic base will quickly overpower him.

How much does Breakthru research cost? To start with, here is an idea of what your income will be like in the first few turns. You start with one planet and an income of 100 BUCs. On your first turn you will conquer the other planet(s) in your home system. Unfortunately, you must then spend quite a few BUCs pacifying the newly conquered worlds, to get their full income. So, while your turn two income will be about 125 BUCs, you will have only about 70-90 to spend on things like research and new scouts. On turn three, however, you should have well over 150 BUCs in income. By turn seven, expect to have between 250 and 400 BUCs income. This is without Investing even one BUC.

With that understanding of how many BUCs you will have to spend, I'll give you some inside tips on how Breakthru research is funded. Every research project requires a certain total amount to be spent before you will receive the breakthrough part. When you've gotten credit for the total, you get the part. Each year (turn) you decide how many BUCs to spend on your research projects. The effectiveness of each BUC decreases with increased spending. The first BUC you spend on a project is worth three BUCs. The second BUC is worth two BUCs. The value drops off, so that by the time you spend about twenty BUCs you're getting only about twenty BUCs value. It drops off further from there. You are told when you reach the one-third or two-third mark of spending to complete the project.

This means that you can achieve breakthrough cheaply if you are patient. Most early breakthroughs (to the first generation of parts beyond those you start the game with) cost about 20-25 BUCs. So you could spend 30 BUCs and get one breakthrough on your first turn. However, you could spend five BUCs each on six projects (getting 8 BUCs credit on each) and get SIX breakthroughs in three turns. You would get credit for 8 BUCs each year on each project, and on the third year have 24 BUCs credit in each of six projects. This would probably complete all six. Later breakthroughs are more expensive, but even then it is better to spend a steady amount than to spend little one turn and splurge the next.

The player chooses an Engine, weapons, shields, armor and other parts. Some designs may have only a few parts: an Engine and a Navigation system for a scout.

Other designs may have one of each category and three weapons systems. It is the Parts which determine what the ship is like. Choose expensive parts and you'll have an expensive ship. Choose heavy parts, and you'll get a heavy (and slow) ship. So to get better ships, research better parts to build the ships with.

The key distinction in research is between ordinary research and breakthrough research. Breakthrough research is used to move to the next generation of part. Like a move from a 386 computer to a 486 computer. Ordinary research is used to make a faster 386 (or 486) computer, or reduce the cost of the ones you already can make. The goal of this article is to help you handle breakthrough research.

When you start a Breakthru project, the part you will eventually discover depends on the part you start from. If you want to get armor with low mass, do a breakthrough research project on the armor you have now with the lowest mass. If you want an engine which is faster rather than one which will run many weapons systems, start with a high acceleration engine, not one with high power. There are many types of each part to start from. You must choose the path which will lead to the part you want to end up with.

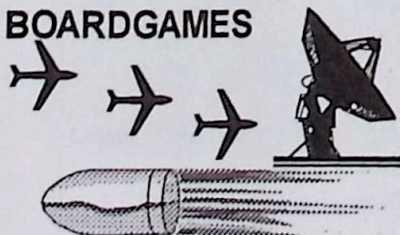
Here's a hint: this is a big star cluster, usually 30 stars per player. This means that you are not going to run into other players for a few turns (five or so), and serious combat will wait for a few turns after that. So concentrate on engines which will move your ships fast, not ones which will support more weapons. You must quickly grab the juicy planets in the systems near you. Then, if your

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Now how should you handle your first few turns of research? The first thing is to form an alliance, or at least a research sharing program, with several other players. One player doing research solo will immediately fall behind a group sharing research. The two areas that need to be concentrated on are: speed and speed. You need faster, cheaper engines, and faster Navigation equipment. Weapons, thrusters, shield and armor can all wait. To expand your empire you need speed.

Here is an example of a plan for a four player alliance or co-operative for the first few turns:

Player One: Primary Responsibility - Navigation

First Turn - Spend 30 BUCs or so on a breakthrough on the better Radar Wave Navigation system (you must have a part maxx-ed out to move on to the next generation, this one is ready). All players should design a transport using the Double Fusion Engine and the better Nav system. The new transport will be available for next turn. This transport will be able to reach nearby star systems with troops next turn. Onward and outward.

Second Turn - Spend 15 BUCs on Max Speed on the Advanced Radar Wave you just discovered. This will max out the part for breakthrough research next turn, and give you (and

your allies) a much faster Max Speed for your new designs. With low Max Speeds like .25 Light Speed that you start with, Max Speed is more important than acceleration early in the game.

Third Turn - Spend 30 BUCs or more on the Advanced Radar part you just maxx-ed out on a breakthrough research project.

Fourth Turn - Spend another 30 BUCs or so on the project you started last turn. This will get you the MicroWave Navigation system. Any extra BUCs you get credit for will be used to reduce the cost etc. of the new part. By turn five, you can be designing ships using third generation Navigation Equipment for your entire alliance.

Player Two: Primary Responsibility - Engines

This player should probably be one of the ones who got the Primary Fusion Engines, not one of the players who got the Secondary Fusion engines (every player gets one or the other). Primary Fusion Engines get you speed, Secondary Fusion Engines get you Power for weapons. You must maxx-out Power in engines before moving on, but you want Acceleration, so you should maxx-out both each step of the way. The reason you spend on Acceleration and max it out is to make sure that when research "branches", that you

follow the branch that gets you acceleration.

First Turn - Spend 10 BUCs each on Power and Acceleration on the Double Fusion Engine, preparing for breakthrough research next turn. Spend 8 BUCs on Power and 8 BUCs on Acceleration on the Primary Fusion engine.

Second Turn - Spend 30 BUCs on breakthrough research from your newly improved Double Fusion engine. Do not worry that its cost (etc.) is too high, you are just using it as a starting point, so the part's current cost is not important. This will get you the Heavy Helium Engine (maximum Acceleration 598, three times what you started the game with). You can knock this engine down to a cost of 16 with power of 117 and acceleration of 179. This is better in both respects than your 30 BUC Double Fusion Engine. Already you are looking at reasonably priced transports. Spend 5 BUCs or more on a breakthrough project using your maxx-ed-out Primary Fusion engine. Money will be tight on turn two if you are trying to build your first transport.

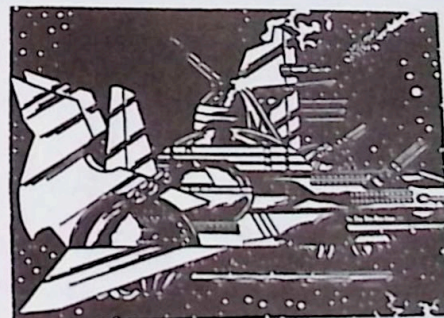
Third Turn - Spend 10 BUCs each on Power and Acceleration on the Heavy Helium engine, preparing for another breakthrough project next turn. You can also spend some on a Reduce project, if you have BUCs to spare, so that you can actually use it rather than just rushing from generation to generation. Spend 25 BUCs on the project you started last turn on

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your Primary Fusion engine. The more you spent last turn, the less you need now. This will get you the Tritium Engine, a nice, cheap source of Acceleration. It will also get you into the Small Fusion line of engines as a bonus breakthrough part.

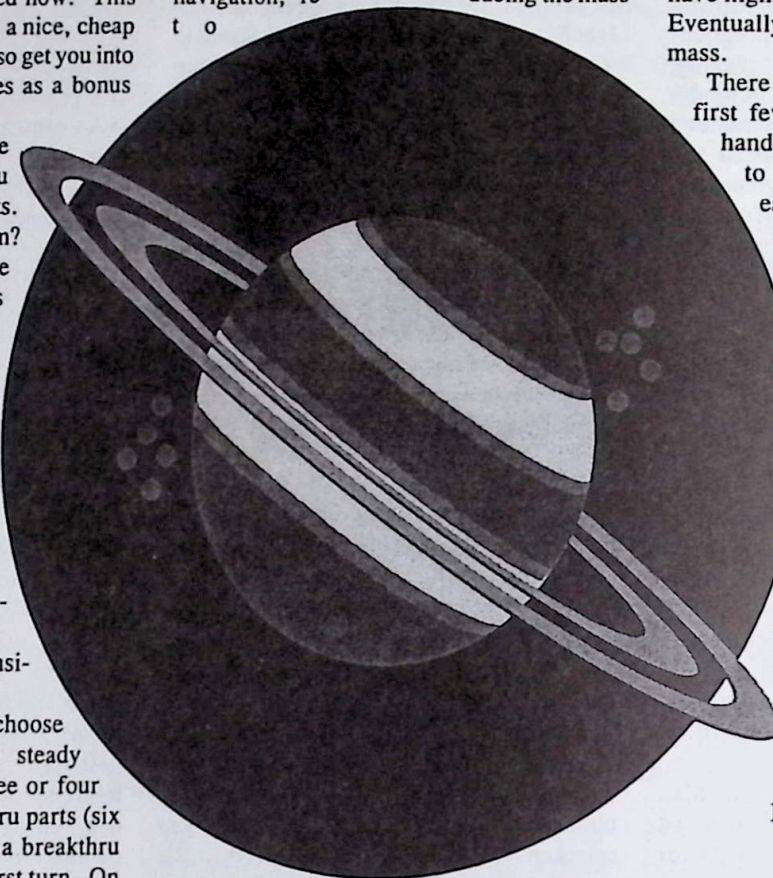
Fourth Turn - Now you have to make some hard choices. You have three new breakthrough parts. Which one(s) will you work from? Also, you will eventually be needing power, because power is what runs your weapons and shields. So do you want to start new breakthrough projects looking for power? Try to keep two or three breakthrough streams going. Maxx out the part one turn, start a breakthrough project on it the next turn.

Player Three: Primary Responsibility - Armor and Shields

Player Four: Primary Responsibility - Weapons and Thrusters

Both of these players should choose several projects for slow and steady breakthrough research. By turn three or four you can have twelve new breakthrough parts (six each). Player three should start a breakthrough project on the Steel Plate armor first turn. On subsequent turns, run a breakthrough stream like

that described above for the engines and navigation, reducing the mass t o



minimum each step. This will get you a series

of lightweight Armors that will allow you to have highly maneuverable ships, with armor. Eventually, you will have armor with zero mass.

There are many other ways of handling the first few turns, and hundreds of ways to handle later turns. Also, there is nothing to prevent two alliances from sharing early research to move the process ahead even faster than I've described above. The key to research is planning and co-operation. Communicate with the other players. Empires will not fight for a time, and you have much to offer each other. I hope that this article will help you in the early stages of Seeds of Destruction's research, and to move on to conquest and victory.

James Eckert is the co-designer and co-programmer of Seeds of Destruction, and designed and programmed the research section of the game.

For more information on Seeds of destruction write to:

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PHOENIX STARTUP

By Rob Watkins

"Desecrators!" roared the Bzorn Drop Leader. The inaudible command thrummed along the silicon based flooring of the drop ready room, and the resultant release of pent tensions became tangible as the troops flowed into action.

The drop chute loading chamber erupted in a cacophony of thrumming. The elite infantry of the Desecrator Legion were going to war, and Hror'm felt the silicon in his veins quicken as he joined his brethren suiting up in battle gear. The Skreelar homeworld! This would be the chance to exact revenge for the atrocities the Skreelar inflicted at the battle of Gamma 4. The laddies would be avenged!

Phoenix is a space game featuring exploration, economic development, diplomacy and military conquest. Six years in the making, Phoenix offers a fine tuned game for game lovers to enjoy.

First, and foremost, Phoenix is a game of diplomacy. One needs to consider this in all aspects of play. With that in mind, lets go play a game of Phoenix. Prior to selecting our race, the only command we have available to us is

to see who else is playing the game. Oh my, there's that dude we stomped on last game. The most vehement string of curses ever to come across a printout emanated from the shattered remnants of his empire.

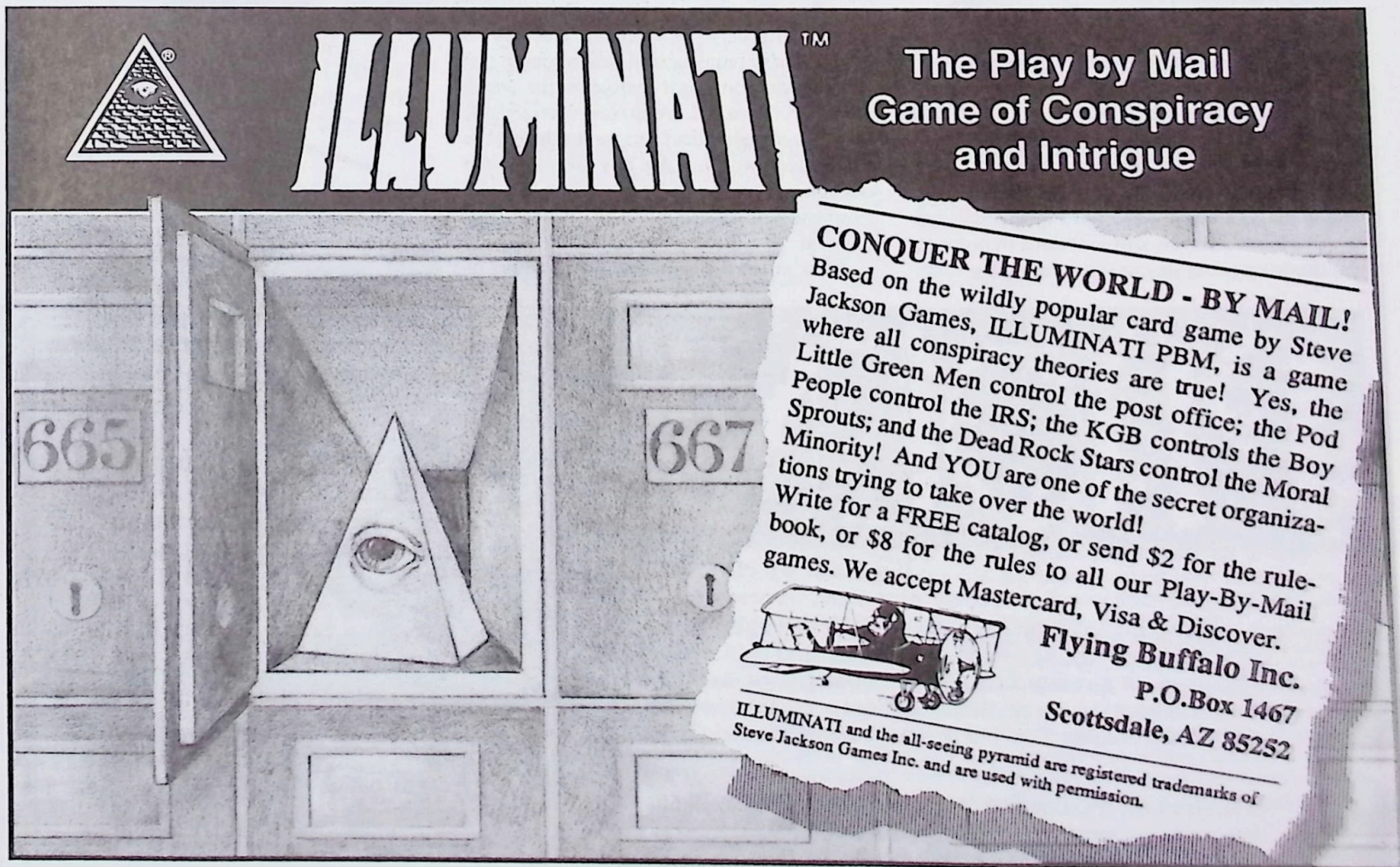
So there may be an irrational madman threatening our fledgling empire. We keep this in mind while examining the races available to us. There are three combat races, two expansion races, a tech race and the humans who dabble in everything. The three combat races are fairly slow to expand, but they are more likely to spend Production Units on military units for economic expansion rather than investing heavily in prefabricated industrial and mining modules for empty planets. The two expansion races are specialists in economic development and early exploration. The tech race starts off the game fairly weak and gets stronger as the game progresses. The humans take the middle road in everything and have no weaknesses other than a lack of specialty.

We shall concentrate on the combat races. We'd rather let someone else build up a

massive economy. Then we will outsmart them tactically and strategically, wresting their bloated capitalist empire away from them. The net result will be a combat race with a large economy. *roar*

The M'rao are space specialists, especially slow to expand due to their transports being pressed to carry ground troops, fighters and colonization modules. Ssauros revel in all forms of combat. They have combat bonuses in both space and ground combat, but are severely hampered in early expansion by the lack of special units and low jump and sensor abilities. The Bzorn are ground specialists, with an impressive array of drop troops which speed along early development. So Bzorn it is, they have strong combat abilities and reasonable expansion abilities giving us a chance to go out and find our agitated foe before he finds us.

After everyone else gets their race selections in, the opening positions are mailed out. Every game has a different map, thus even turn zero results are pored over with exacting scrutiny. How many systems with



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inhabitable planets reside within scanner range? How many systems are within shuttle range, allowing the use of commercial transports rather than the state of the art military transports? What is the density of the universe, that is, the number of inhabitable planets relative to the total number of sectors in the universe? How does the density of the local region compare with the overall universe density?

Armed with this new knowledge, we prepare our first turn. The Bzorn are not renowned for their prefabricated construction module technology, and it will require substantial cargo space for them to accomplish anything. So we build a heavy transport on the first turn, which will free up our starport in case we need additional ships the second turn. We put our command centers to use, sending out three probes and two light transports carrying guard and light infantry to explore the stars.

The results arrive, and we have much to mull over before filing our second turn. One of the transports has discovered a juicy primitive world to colonize, and a probe has found a large inhabitable empty planet. Scans of areas outside the initial homeworld area have come in and plans can be formulated for the systematic exploration of these newly discovered worlds. Two small uninhabited planets and a system inhabited by the Imperium round out our exploration efforts. We plan on assimilating the primitive world into our budding empire, while sending out a large load of colonization modules with the heavy transport to the uninhabited world. We also explore a couple of other worlds in the fringes to keep our options open in the future.

We engage in active diplomacy with the other players. Most are willing to exchange approximate homeworld locations in order to facilitate opening discussions regarding early

attacks, alliances and other discussions. The madman holds true to our expectations and threatens to file harassment charges if we ever send email to him again. We plug in the various locations and narrow down the madman's location to either adjacent to us, or on the other side of the universe. If he is indeed on the other side of the universe, we have little to worry about. But if he is next to us, then we'd better make preparations to deal with that problem. We'll concentrate our deep exploration efforts in that direction. If it is empty space, we may get a jump on grabbing the territory. If the lunatic resides there, we'll attempt to carry the battle to him.

The game progresses fairly smoothly for a while until we run into our nemesis adjacent to us. A flurry of mail gets sent out to everyone who could help out in the brewing slugfest. A couple of encouraging responses are received and some battle plans are etched out. We are responsible for sending two attack groups into his space while a third fleet carries an invasion army toward the homeworld area. One of our allies will be sending probes deep into the homeworld area in an attempt to find out the destination of the main army.

The next turns are rather tense as probes cross over the border. Many of our commands are tied up eliminating the probes which have delved too deeply into our territory. The three fleets roll up to the front and care is taken to keep their movements hidden. But disaster! Our foe turns out to be a Skreelar and uses his extraordinary jump capabilities to squash one of the attack groups as it approaches the launch site. The other attack group continues onward, while the invasion fleet sets up for the plunge to the homeworld. An ally pinpoints the location of the enemy homeworld while our command centers deploy. The invasion fleet dives in!

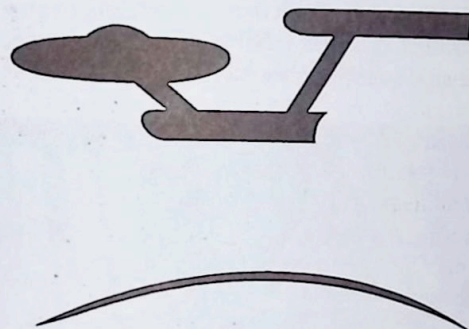
Hror'm led the remnants of the squad of

Elite Infantry under the streets of the Skreelar capital. They had encountered heavy resistance and many of his friends had perished fighting their way through the withering onslaught of the homeworld defense. But orders were orders, the Drop Leader had committed his troops to the assault.

"Desecrators!" thrummed out as the final assault began anew. The stench of ozone filled the air as heavy weapons discharged their lethal load. A Bzorn disappeared in a puce haze. Hror'm hefted his pulsed phase cannon and let a charge fly into the capitol building. An eerie blue crackling lightning spread over the structure. Small cracks began to appear within the walls, and the ground began to shake. The capital imploded and disappeared with a thunderous roar. The battle won, the Skreelar defeated, Hror'm would feel no pain this night.

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HOW TO CONQUER THE GALAXY - THE HISTORY OF THE RAPID EXPANSION CORPORATION

By Andrew Barton

I was one of the playtesters for the SOL version of Phoenix, where I was asked to play at least one turn per day so as to test the game as much as possible before the commercial release date. This is an account of how I got on, what were my strategy choices, what mistakes I made, what worked and what didn't. Of course, not all of the things I did would be wise in a multi-player game - leaving an EX 20 world with 20 MC and no garrison is putting a lot of temptation in the way of your neighbors!

I'll go into most detail on the first few turns, because I believe that getting your economic expansion off to a flying start is crucial.

Choosing A Race

With only neutrals to fight, an expansionist race seems the obvious choice. I went for the Pini because of their edge in command/sensor range, particularly useful for a strategy of taking empty and PRIMITIVE worlds first, then using the resources from those to swamp the neutrals. Those Robot Tanks look nice as well...

The First Turn

There's quite a discussion in the Player's Guide on different approaches to the first turn:

build more ships and
until you get the
tion reports?
S e n d
out

ground forces,
modules, neither, both?
Some people with expe-
rience of the earlier
playtest recom-
mend, for most
r a c e s ,
C C s

CCs or wait
first explora-

as well as an SC, carrying an LI and a seventh
OP, which I build. There's a 40% chance the
system will be empty, giving me an instant
forward base. There's also a small chance of
a PRI world having only one ground unit,
in which case

I can land safely
without a risk of
losing my OP.
And if neither of
those comes up,
I'm scouting
f o u r

building extra
(or even a second
CP) so as to get more
scouting on turn 1.

I think that the best
answer depends on the geography
of the local worlds - so Pini have an
advantage because they can see
further at the start. Indeed, when my
turn 0 printout arrives, I can see eleven
other systems. All but one are within my jump
range of 5, and six are within my initial shuttle
range.

Good number, six. I have six starting
Probes/Scouts, and six commands available.
So the obvious start is to send explorers to
those six systems. But one of those systems
is close to another three further out. I decide
to take a chance and send an LT to that system

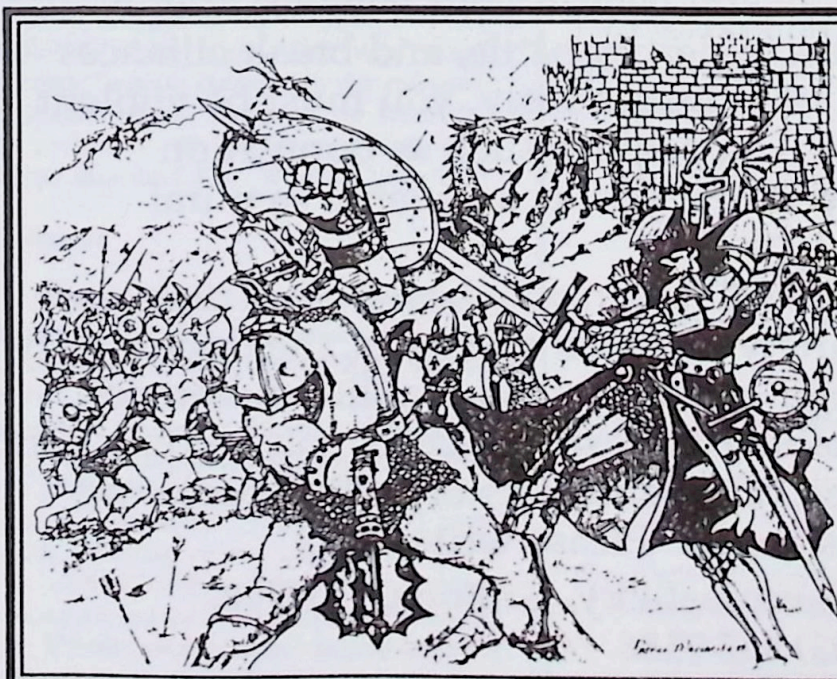
other
systems
with in
range of that
odds in
at least

jump
one, long
my favor that
one will be
empty.

Sending out a
Command unit on turn 1 is not
in anyone's list of suggestions that
I've seen, but I think it's a fair gamble if
'the stars are right'!

The other decision to make is my initial
research. I have starting values of 3 in several
fields, and decide to put 1 point each into Space
and Communications/Sensors, planning to
switch to pushing my GEN up to 9 over the
following few turns.

The Second Turn



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* NOW WITH LASER GRAPHICS *

Just about all the news is good. Two primitive worlds, but none of those dangerous Zulu's. Two big empty worlds with EX 19 and 21. And a Kresh world with fleet BK BK, only two ships, a good target for a drop attack later.

Also...the gambles of sending out an OP worked. It's sitting over one of the high EX empties, and there's a whole cluster of systems nearby, making it an excellent forward base.

I'll send a single GI to each of the primitive worlds, since their defense of 10 makes them immune to the primitive LI and RA. I'll scout the worlds in jump range of the homeworld I missed last time.

The harder decision: how to start exploiting the high EX worlds? The cheapest way is to ship out a few IM and MM and build most of the MC on site, but that means that it takes several turns to get the production on line. I'll send out an HT and IM 9 MM, and bring the forward base world on stream in one go. Because I'll take the world this turn when I unload the OP, the units will produce on the turn that I land them.

Early Expansion

For the next few turns I'm exploring further out, sending modules to empty worlds,

and capturing primitive worlds with single GIs. Giving two INVADE orders on the same turn means that I wipe out the primitive garrisons in one turn - as a Pini, I can easily spare the commands.

On turn 3 I unload the modules from my HT, but forgot to give the CONVERT order, costing me a turn's production. Since the PRI worlds I capture are contested, this means that the first imported RMs arrive at my Homeworld on turn 4, giving me a sudden stockpile of 25 RM.

I discover a couple of disadvantages of my fast track development. One comes when the large number of MCs built early give me my first windfall on turn 4, with my GEN level still not yet at 9, so that I only get 2 R&D points from the windfall instead of 3. The other is that to use those 25 RM I have to build 15 new ICs, leaving me little production for the next turn's expansion. So, instead of building modules, I build an RD, load it up with my starting Marines, and send them off for my first drop attack, at the Kresh world I found initially. I include a couple of PR to face the defending BK BK.

Over the next few turns I find several KRE and CTU neutrals. Most of these, even the CTU, have no ship in their fleets larger than an FR. This means that one strategy would be to

build an MR or two, send them out singly and do repeated attacks, relying on the invulnerability of an MR to attacks of 7 or less, no matter the difference in space proficiency. But since most of these fleets are fairly small (two to four ships) and none include drop stoppers, I continue to use sacrificial PRs to face the warships and invade with MA and RT. This has the advantage that I can concentrate my combat research on Ground proficiency.

The number of commands I need goes up and down each turn depending on how much fighting I'm doing. I make it a rule that, whenever I have a command post I don't need to use, I ship it out from the homeworld. By turn 8 I have 8 command posts and 4 have been moved out.

At the end of turn 8 I can compare my position with the averages given in the Player's Guide. I have 9 systems, total EX of 149, sustainable production of 89. This is a bit better than the 'two-thirds of empires' figures in the Guide, but of course I have no competition!

Into The Outer Reaches

By this time I've occupied all of the area within one jump of the homeworld (except for

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a tough CTU system). Now I'm having to operate further out, much more planning is needed. First, I'm having to use off-homeworld CCs to order my scouting and invasions, and only a few of these can cover any one area, even with a Pini's command range. Secondly, forces to conquer or develop a world built at the homeworld need two or three turns to get where they're needed, tying up transports for four or six turns for the round trip, and needing that many more commands.

I choose to concentrate on developing empty worlds. By turn 12 this seems to be going well: I'm up to 15 worlds out of 35 in the galaxy, I have 145 IC at the homeworld, and I've got a 15 unit drop army picking off neutrals one at a time.

Trouble is, my logistical problems are getting severe. In particular, there's half a dozen worlds in the 'opposite corner' to my homeworld. They're more than twice my jump and command range away, and it's difficult even to scout them, never mind conquer them.

In an effort to solve these problems I change my development strategy and start building up IC on my ring of worlds one jump out. The idea is to save shipping and orders by building modules and ground troops nearer to where they're needed.

Up to a point, this works. Trouble is, the RM used by my newly build ICs are the ones that used to go to the homeworld. For the next four turns some of my homeworld ICs are idle for lack of RMs.

Even so, I decide I can now spare the production to build warships. Up until turn 12 I still had my homeworld starport at the original value of 40, but now I increase it to 100, allowing me to build an MR and an HT that turn. The MR will go and deal with some of the larger neutral fleets.

By turn 16, I have 23 worlds, but my 'sustainable homeworld production' has actually dropped to 137. Still, I've now explored every world, and have enough military force to conquer all the remaining neutrals. Soon I'll have my GROUND research up to 25, giving me a proficiency higher than the CTU. What can go wrong?

Endgame

Well, I manage to let quite a lot go wrong. Twice I miscalculate jump ranges and invasion armies don't turn up where they're needed. Then I put two armies over the last CTU and drop them separately. I started with 9 units to 6 but because my armies fight separately, when the smoke clears I've got GI MA left, and so have the defenders! The next turn I attack again, counting on my edge of 1 point in Ground proficiency, but the chances of war go against me and the final survivor is a defending GI. It'll take me another turn to get a new army to the system and one more to invade it, leaving

me with a win in 21 turns. The consolation is, I'll have enough time to build a Battle Moon, just to see what one looks like!

Lessons Learned

What would I do differently in another game! Well, giving priority to ground research was a mistake. I had no problem building large enough armies to crush any neutral by weight of numbers, and putting the same research effort into JUMP would have let me get the armies where they were needed in the last few turns much sooner. I'd have got better production from the improved shuttle range as well.

I should have pushed out more command posts, and further. Any race should do this, but Pini in particular should exploit their racial advantage of cheap OPs.

Seeing it was a solo game, I could have afforded to ignore SPACe research altogether, and relied almost entirely on drop attacks. I could also have put out a military effort earlier, and conquered more of the high value neutrals, at the expense of developing the empty worlds more slowly. As it was, my production only took off in the last few turns as I finally took the CTU worlds; by that time there was little useful to spend it on, as new fighting units

wouldn't have got to the last distant worlds before the end of the game.

I made a number of small order format mistakes. I could have avoided all these by using the forecast facilities - and I'd recommend everyone to get forecasts before committing their orders whenever possible. I didn't do so in this game because of time pressure, and it probably made me take two or three more turns to win as a result.

In a multi-player game, I think I'd use the same starting development strategy, of picking the highest EX world I could find and dumping a transport full of modules on it. After the first three turns or so, I'd switch to more gradual economic expansion to allow me to produce warships: otherwise I'd just be setting myself up as a prime target for greedy neighbors.

Last Word

It was fun! I'll do it again sometime: choosing quite a different race. Next time I'll take it slow and careful and try to set a record that will be hard to beat.

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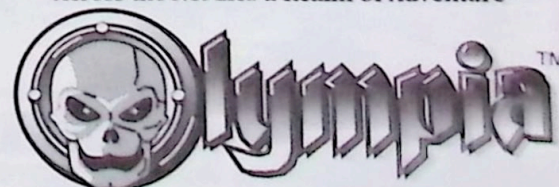
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Player participation in our email games continue to grow. Approximately 30% of our players submit and receive their Galactic Anarchy turns by email. We have also generated a text version of our Galactic Anarchy rulebook - contact us and we'll be happy to zap it your way, or, to send you the free mini rulebook.

Many players have jumped on our free Armed Forces Commander rulebook offer. Act fast, as the first 50 free ones are about gone. Armed Forces Commander is a simple to play, yet challenging wargame of conquest. The positions, and types of units are displayed on a beautiful flowing map which depicts the surrounding terrain. If you've never played a wargame before because you've been afraid of the complexity, then you really need to try AFC. You won't be disappointed.

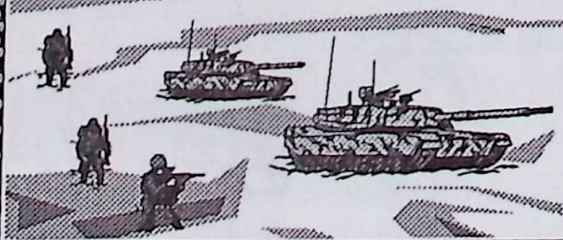
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DAURADA GAMES

Congratulations go out to the OTHER WORLDERS stable for having the top team on turns one and two of Avanti (Track #1), as well as to TALON of the BLACK RIDERS for having the top Charioteer for those same turns. The slow track (Ishadara, #2) is still awaiting its first run. Players can join either track at any time.

While the program engine runs as planned, the data base seems to be able to rewrite itself as spelling errors crop up. I suspect that is due to my causing more errors in the process of eliminating the spelling errors I already have.

New CHARIOTEERS rulebooks have been created and by the time this is in print all account holders should have received their free copy. If you haven't gotten yours yet, let me know. The original (lime-green or plain white 8.5x11" rules) had a few misprints as well as being less than user-friendly. I hope the new version will clarify the gray areas that the first version had. Anyone who requested a set-up that was turned off by the old rulebook, you may request a copy of the revised rulebook at no charge.

CHARIOTEERS was playtested during marathon gaming weekends from mid-December '93 to March of '94. Those playtesters run in a track separate from current players as they have an unfair advantage of having seen paper copies of the program when

things crashed. I would like to thank them here for their patience with my loud one way conversations with the computer during those early game sessions.

I am starting preliminary work on Beyond The Track Wall, which is an expansion game for Charioteers that have gotten so good they are impossible to beat and are clogging up the ranks, around mid-October. Unlike CHARIOTEERS (100% comp mod) it will be a combination of computer and hand moderation in which I hope to combine the best of both worlds into a challenging adventure game in the world in which CHARIOTEERS is set. BTTW will be more flexible than CHARIOTEERS and a suiting reward for the player who has invested the time to push a CHARIOTEER into "forced" retirement.

While work begins on BTTW, CHARIOTEERS is my main concern and I will entertain any and all suggestions from players for making it better.

As the ad says, your first set-up is free, and there are no hidden costs. For those wondering what the sliding fees is about: The turn fee is \$2.00 for the first charioteer and \$0.80 for each charioteer after that.

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ECKERT GAMING GROUP

We've ended our Special Half Price Set-up Deal on Seeds of Destruction, but we've improved the Super Set-up to 8 turns from the normal 6 turns. The Seeds of Destruction rules are only \$2.50. A set-up and three turns is \$10.00, and the set-up and eight turns are only \$20.00. The rules are free with your first set-up. Turns are only \$5.00, and they go to \$5.50 on turn eleven and \$6.00 on turn twenty-

one. By the point in the game you may well be using the maximum of six turnsheets, and well over 200 orders. There are never any additional charges or extra fees for extra orders.

We reintroduced our FIVE turns for \$5.00 set-up in Death & Sorrow. This introductory level wargame is fast paced and deadly. Games usually last 13-15 turns. Rules, set-up and five turns are only five dollars. Turns are \$2.50, \$3.00 for turns ten and beyond. Rules for this game are only \$1.00.

In response to suggestions that we provide some hints to players in Seeds of Destruction, we provided some advice for early turns last issue. We continue that here. The key to early space travel in Seeds of Destruction is not the acceleration of your ships (acceleration determines how fast they reach top speed). The key to fast travel early on is your Ship's maximum Speed, which is determined by your navigation equipment. The reason for this is that even slower acceleration ships will spend most of their time traveling at their maximum speed. So work for a breakthru in Navigation equipment before any other breakthrus.

Here's a tip if you have unpopulated worlds in a system. Many systems have Iceworlds or Infernos with no population. When one of your planets in such a system reaches maximum population, start transferring excess population to the empty world. If you transfer less than would grow on your full world this turn, you lose no population! The growth makes up for the lost pop, and the empty planet starts becoming productive. So do not do this until your main world is full, though. Population transferred to hostile worlds have their Tech cut in half, and you have to pay to boost morale as well.

Information on our games is always free.

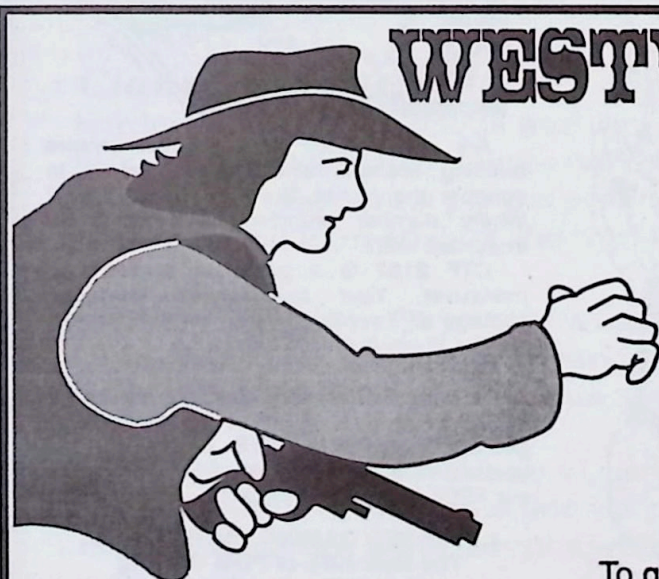
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BEmps (Benevolent Empires): TOTAL WAR - Game #1 of TOTAL WAR should be underway by the time anyone reads this. TOTAL WAR is based in the Star Trek™ universe as portrayed in the movie and Star Fleet Battles™ and Federation And Empire™ game systems. It is a closed-ended strategic and tactical game of combat and economics waged between the United Federation of Planets and its allies, and the Klingon and Romulan Empires and their allies. Players begin the game with pre-arranged fleets, deployments, colonies, etc. and play using the unique BEmps (Benevolent Empires) sector generation, movement and economic systems. Starships are constructed in shipyards using resource points (RPs) which must be mined from other worlds. Special resources such as dilithium and antimatter are strategically important. Players begin with pre-arranged types of starships they may build and obtain new designs as the game progresses.

Setup, rules and first turn costs only \$20.00. Rules alone cost \$12.50. Individual turns are \$3.00 each with additional charges explained in the rules book. There are no hidden costs. We strive for a 2-3 week turnaround time. We are currently inviting signups for Game #2 of TOTAL WAR.

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Rules, setup and first turn costs \$20.00. Each turn costs \$3.00 plus any additional charges. There are no hidden costs, but additional charges are outlined in the rules.

We are also organizing **FREE** playtests of our games in development, in particular, the rules for **World War III: A Fire Across Europe**, a regimental-level game of modern conflict in Europe, have been mailed out to several playtesters. **World War III: A Fire On the Oceans**, a ship-to-ship simulation of modern warfare on the high seas, is still in development. Playtest #1 of **Confederation**

Frontier!, a game of "character development" on the interstellar frontier is set to begin. We apologize for the delays in these playtests, but the rules and systems for these games are still in development.

ENTERTAINMENT PLUS MORE, INC.

The latest news with Entertainment Plus...

Further improvements to the order form and data entry methods are making life easier for both the players and our staff. A bulletin board system for players with computers and modems is in the planning stage; more posted on this later.

If you are just curious about AG an introductory brochure is available; just send a self-addressed stamped envelope (#10, business size) and you'll receive it shortly. As a special offer to the readers of *Paper Mayhem*, you can write "referred by *Paper Mayhem*" on your first Adventurer Creation Sheet, which will give you a \$5 credit to your account. Please note this takes the place of being referred by another person, and that the credit more than pays for the rulebook.

Why not send for a rulebook (\$3.50, over 30 pages, with illustrations) or informational brochure (29¢ self-addressed stamped envelope requested) today? If overseas, please add \$2.00 for the rulebook. Also be sure to see our section in the PBM Activity Corner to

get a glimpse into the recent happenings within the guild halls.

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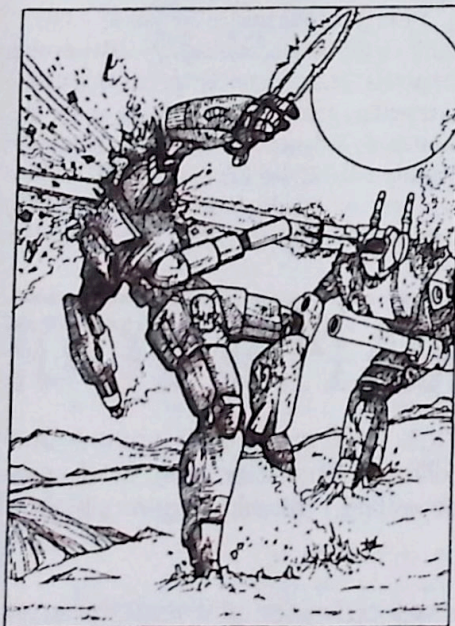
FLYING DUTCHMAN GAMES

Flying Dutchman Games is pleased to announce the introduction of our new output format for **Quest of the Great Jewels**. To improve the readability and make it easier for players to analyze their turns, we have reduced the number of abbreviations (only one or two are left, and we have plans for those!), added blank lines between provinces, and print one leader per line, sorted by player (no more missing leader in a long list!). The change is quite dramatic. If you have played QJ before and didn't like the printout, take a look at the new one - you can ask for a sample at the address below. Ken Mitchell graphics has also created a new map. It is Larger (11x17), with room for player's names and addresses next to the map itself.

We will be at **AndCon** again this year, it is a great place to meet other PBM players and moderators - come by our booth and say hello!

To help introduce players to the new printouts, **Flying Dutchman** is making the

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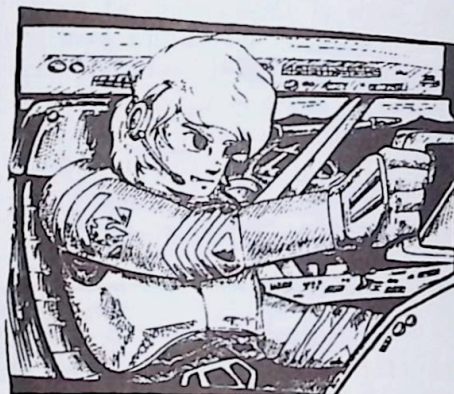
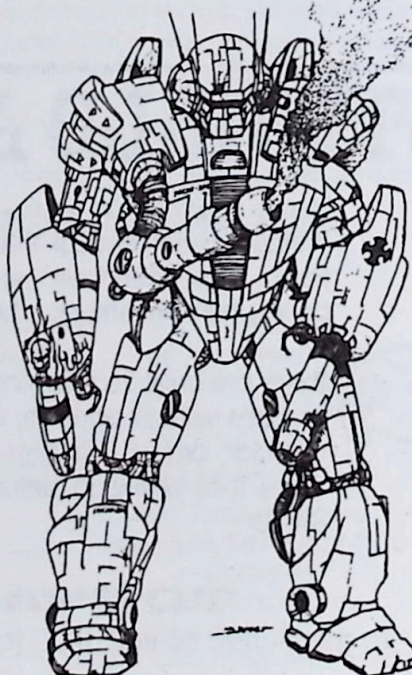


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CIS: 70674,2424

FRACTAL DIMENSIONS

Once again our bags are packed. Soon we will be leaving for Independence, Ohio, to attend AndCon '94. Things are hectic as usual around convention season. We have created a new booth display to premiere, of course, at AndCon this September. Throughout the summer, the theme song for the booth project seemed to be "this needs just this one little change here," again and again for each individual piece. Finally, the presentation met our expectations and we dubbed it completed. This year, we should be at booth 402 (god willing), so if you are at AndCon '94, stop by to visit us and view our handiwork.

While Kathy was spending her summer designing the new exhibit, Don was spending his summer putting the final touches on our new game--Toadal Chaos, and it is now in

playtest. What is Toadal Chaos you ask? Toadal Chaos - The Frog Wars is a PBM game that simulates the primitive warfare of amphibian clans on the distant, post-holocaustic planet, Reptilia. Mutated intelligent frogs and toads, which congregated to form tribal societies, now follow the path of man by engaging in small scale warfare. These warring clans survive by partaking in open fights for territory, raids on rival villages and expeditions to find goods and ancient artifacts.

Each game has between four to ten players in which each player controls a native Reptilian settlement and its occupants. Each player uses a game turn to direct his settlements' occupants to participate in combat (both magical and conventional), capture opponent pieces and make alliances to fulfil the various victory conditions. During AndCon, we will be taking set-ups for production games starting in November. There will be sample rulebooks and displays at our booth. Toadal Chaos. Totally new from Fractal Dimensions. Check it out.

You wonder, what ever happened to our other game, Warriors of the Fractal Domain, that was in development? We noticed that many companies were creating a NEW and DIFFERENT space game. Rather than be just-another-space-game, Fractal Dimensions decided to table the idea for now. We still plan to develop the game, however it may be a year

or so, before we resume development on Warriors.

Back to AndCon...as we mentioned in the last issue, Fractal Dimensions will be running DUEL as an event this year. It is scheduled for Saturday at 12:30 and the event number is 66. Playing at the convention is a good way to check out a game to see if it is to your liking. Join in the fun. We hope to see you there.

Oh! The latest Fractal Spectrum will be available at our booth. Stop by and pick up a sample copy. Free!

Just for general information, DUEL source books are \$5.00. DUEL setups, which include the source book and two turns, are \$13.00. DUEL's turn fee has a fixed rate of \$5.00 for playing 5 student characters. (Also, see our ad elsewhere in this issue of Paper Mayhem.) For information concerning Toadal Chaos - The Frog Wars, send a SASE to our address below, e-mail or call us.

Fractal Dimensions
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Internet: fractal@fractal.cit.cornell.edu
ChaosNet Access Node: (607) 753-6579
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GAMER'S DEN

Gamer's Den is a PBEM gaming

Yellowseed Games Of Canada

Box 172, Shellbrook, SK, Canada, S0J 2E0

Balance of Power: A 20-player wargame with full economics, nearly 100 different unit types, professional full-color map with computer updates, air, land and sea units, spying and espionage, investment, trade, diplomacy with technology changes from WWI to present (non-nuclear). Basic \$6 per turn fee. Rules, map and startup turn \$15.

Clans of Trove: Become a wise, benevolent herding clan leader or the fierce, battle hardened ruler of a vicious war clan or an astute trader more concerned in profit than war. Hand-moderated, open-ended, and no turn deadlines give players full latitude in this huge game. Sea clans ply the ocean in arks and galleys. The Emperor, Soxhes Imperium, is attempting to re-enslave the world. Can you stop his evil growth? Basic \$4 turn fee.

Cosa Nostra: Pit your wits against 11 other players in the struggle to be **Capo di Tutti Capi**. This game has no random factors. Use bribes, muscle, weapons, protection rackets to further your nefarious ways. Rules, setup and first turn \$10. Turns \$5.

US players get full advantage of currency exchange (currently 30%!) on \$20 checks. 3-week games to accommodate US players. Mail or faxed turns. Contact us for information on all games and current specials. Phone (306)-747-3568 or fax (306)-747-3592.

company, and anyone with access to Internet electronic mail or a CompuServe account can play in our games. The PBEM gaming experience at the Den is very different from its paper gaming counterpart. Foremost is the built-in turn checking that eliminates the order entry errors so common in PBM games. Games proceed at faster paces (once a week or more), turn submission and results are transferred in hours, and rules are available for free on-line. Most of our games feature free graphical interfaces to browse turn results and generate orders. Our prices are significantly cheaper than most PBM fees.

Right now we offer two games, Phoenix and VGA Planets. Industrial Empire is in playtest and will be released shortly. Odyssey is still in development. New accounts get 2 free turns in all our games, and you can get 4 free turns of Phoenix for each player referral. We publish a monthly e-newsletter and post copies on the Internet, CompuServe and AOL.

Phoenix is a close-ended PBEM space game of diplomacy, exploration, economic expansion and military conquest. The game has a strong wargame feel to it, and units and player positions are elegantly balanced. Each game has a new galaxy, so no two games play the same. You control a space empire composed of one of seven different racial types expanding from a single homeworld. Your goal is to control over half of the galaxy, either singly or jointly with up to a quarter of the players in the game. Pump R&D points to increase your combat, sensor, jump drive and science technology. Balance your military and economic growth as you explore the galaxy and search for your neighbors. Drop off command centers on secure planets to monitor and direct your expansion. Centralize your production on a few planets or distribute your efforts. Most important, negotiate with other players while playing close attention to the planet tally to insure you are one of the winners.

You can start off in single player Phoenix games to learn the rules and play the game at your own speed for only \$1.00 per turn. Practice with each of the different races to get a feel for the strategies involved. Then, when you are ready, jump into a multi-player game for \$2.50 per turn. You can test your wargaming skill in two player challenge Mercury matches, join into the diplomatic web of the 20 player Jupiter games or signup for anything in between. If you've got an MS-DOS machine with VGA, then we've got a treat for you. The Phoenix Ambassador by Dan Moen of What Software is available for free. It is a great graphical tool to help you browse through the galaxy and plot your steps to conquest. Dan spent a great deal of time on the program and it shows. The 200+ page Phoenix Player's Guide is available for free ftp download on the Internet and CompuServe in the PBMGAMES forum. We have printed

copies available for \$15. The Guide is filled with strategy and tips, so it is a great companion to arm-chair generals.

For those VGA Planets players and wanna-bees, we host public and private games for only 50 cents a turn with a maximum of \$15 per game. For games that run over 100 turns, that's less than 15 cents a turn for professional moderation. VGA Planets is Tim Wisseman's open-ended space conquest game that uses a VGA MS-DOS graphic interface.

Our most ambitious game to date - Industrial Empire - is now in playtest. You are the president of a western-style country set in the tech level of the barely pre-nuclear era. Your task is to guide your nation through the rocky waters of international politics and military conflict for a standard term of office. Victory goes to the player who guides their nation best, based on happiness of the people at the end of the term. Your people's happiness is driven by three different measures: consumer spending, life expectancy and the size of your Empire.

In Industrial Empire, you are in complete command of the military and diplomatic actions of your country. You influence economics through tax policy, trade policy and the buying/selling of strategic materials on the open market. An AI plays the role of your civilian economy, trading with other cities in the world, spending money on consumer goodies, growing the factories and mines, saving money for a rainy day and manufacturing military and civilian products. Your people are generally loyal and will support you in most activities.

Industrial Empire was written by Dave Pare and Jonathan Lee of Network Games Limited, and the game offers a rich computer AI controlled back-drop for players to direct their nation's quest for civic happiness. Each facet of the game is tracked and handled in enormous detail, and you must master the resource, economic and supply issues that face industrial nations as well as grappling with military issues. Games will cost \$3.50 a turn and feature the Advisor, a required player interface for PC Windows and some Unix X11 platforms.

To find out more about signing up, you can send Internet email to info@den.com or download the file INFO.DEN in library 15 of CompuServe's PBMGAMES forum. We also have files on America On-Line - use keyword PBM and look in the File Library.

Gamer's Den

PO Box 390755

Mt View, CA 94039-0755

Internet Readme: info@den.com

Internet Support: support@den.com

CIS Readme: INFO.DEN in lib 15 of the PBMGAMES forum

CIS Support: 73613,3472

GODFATHER GAMES

Godfather Games is proud to announce that we have two more PBM games. The Coliseum and Coliseum II. Both games are a mixture of computer and hand moderated. Set-up fees are at \$20 for both games.

The Coliseum offers One on One combat in an Arena style combat. There is one catch to this game, we are offering a Prize* to the Champion of The Coliseum (2nd and 3rd place prizes also). You create everything about your Character. This game features a unique combat system, full magic system, you decide your moves in your own words, and if you lose you get a free set-up in The Coliseum II or The Godfather of Astini. This game is easy to learn and intense to play. Only \$10 set-up and \$2.50 a turn afterward. This is the 1st annual Tournament that we plan to offer. Deadline is October 15th.

The Coliseum II was written in the same spirit of The Coliseum, but is an ongoing game and assumes the role of a manager instead of being the gladiator that sets up opportunities for team combat up to 4 players, the buying and selling of warriors, challenges from other players and much more. Only \$10 set-up and \$2.50 a turn afterward.

The goal of Godfather Games is to delight our customers, and to serve them with PBM games that are interesting and fun to play. We understand that this company is new, and not that many people have played our games. We have a balanced mix of computer moderation and human gamemastering for all our games, this allows the computer to make the decision as far as the game operation is concerned (this allows for fairness for all the players). After the computer makes the operational decisions, we write the responses in a creative way so that you will enjoy the narrative part as well. Eventhough we are a new company we feel confident that we have a lot to offer to the public, with four games that will challenge you, and a Mail Order catalog, with the option to buy products through the mail starting at 25% off retail prices. If you want a catalog then please write to us at the address below.

We sincerely hope you will like the games that we have created. Thank you.

Godfather Games

PO Box 642

Burlington, VT 05402

(802) 879-7810

HIGH POINT GAMES

As always, High point Games is happy to accept new players for both regular games and introductory games of World War IV. Since games #1011 and 1013 just started, there's plenty of room in the next two games. Expect them to fill up and start this fall. Check out

World War IV and High Point Games in the ratings, then sign up to discover the game and company that earned them!

Take your choice of a regular game, facing off against the grizzled veterans of World War IV. These games start with 40 players, and are open to anyone. Don't expect a lot of time for trial and error, unless the percentage of "error" in your "trials" is particularly low!

Or ease into things with an introductory game, populated only with new players and with players who've never survived past the opening of a regular game. Introductory games may start with fewer than 40 players (but will always have at least 20) to allow for a bit more experimentation and expansion before your existence is on the line. Other than the number of players and their experience, there's no difference between regular games and introductory games; the rules, map, units and everything else are identical. There's more neutral space and breathing room, but the games will reach the same intensity as the regular games.

High Point Games
2142 Terrimill Terrace
Chesterfield, MO 63017-7518

KEITH LANGLEY

ANCIENT EMPIRES: Game #3 now

has five of the six registrants needed to begin; it can accommodate 20 players, so there's plenty of room for you. This is a detailed, century-scale ancients wargame with heavy emphasis on diplomacy, and a long project. Game #1 is 2 1/2 years old and still going, though it is down to four players and looks likely to end soon. Game #3 will be a "slow" game, with one turn per month, to accommodate international players and those on a tight (time or money) budget. For those who prefer a more active pace, Game #2 is still fairly new, and with 9 players has room for several more.

ONE TRUE FAITH: A new game of OTF is starting very soon, and may have already started. This is a hard game to join once it has been in progress for very long, as the map fills up rapidly. If you want to experience Godlike power for yourself, and have thousands of devoted worshippers, but you don't play basketball well enough to do a Nike commercial, this is your chance!

LLUCKY LLAMA GAMES

New map for You Rule! - You feel you've conquered Highland, but are you ready for Isotope? Isotope is composed of one large land mass flanked by two smaller islands. Several precast portals exist as connections among the islands, but they vary from game to

game. Isotope, as with Highland, allows eight to ten players. Remember, you get a laser-printed map with every mailed turn showing your position in the game.

Anonymous You Rule! - Are you spending too much money on phone calls? Do your allies call you at all hours of the day and night? Try an anonymous game of You Rule! The only communication allowed is a defined coded set of messages. Nobody knows the identity of the players until the game is over.

Play You Rule! for Less - Electronic mail players receive a \$1 discount on all turn fees of You Rule!. We are planning all-Internet games of You Rule! at a further reduce rate. Call for details.

Lucky Llama Games
80-Q North Cabrillo Highway
Box #226
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019-1667
Phone/Fax: (415) 712-0283

MAELSTROM GAMES

The 2nd edition of **Lords of Destiny** is finally completed! All games now being setup are 2nd edition games. The new rulebook for this is a tremendous improvement over the original. It is now 28 pages long, even with the old basic version deleted from it. The result is a much easier to understand game

ADVENTURER KINGS

The Play-by Mail Game of
Epic Adventure and Imperial Conquest.

Consistently rated one of the top fantasy
wargames with fascinating depth, yet easy to learn.

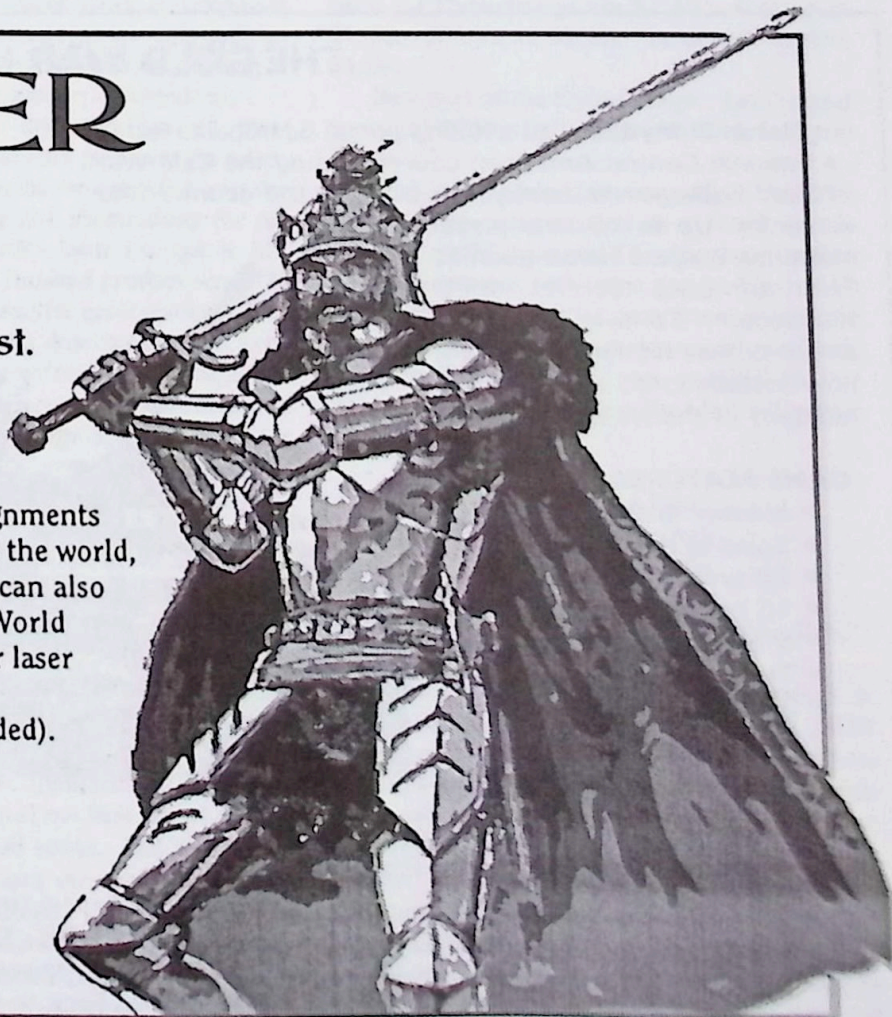
Here's why!

Adventurer Kings pits twelve players of different alignments against each other, each vying to win artifacts, explore the world, and conquer monsters, heroes, and each other. Players can also excel in eight different offices, including the coveted World Emperor. The game features English turn reports, color laser printed maps, and is playable by post, disk and email.

Try a three turn sample game for \$9.50 (rules included).
Rules alone are \$4.00 and turns are \$5.00.



The Coconut Council, Inc.
6508 Minnetonka Boulevard
St. Louis Park, MN 55426-3451
Phone: (612) 929-7788
Fax: (612) 797-7468



system. A useful 5-page appendix includes common errors, 2 player reference sheets, a player aid sheet and a complete index. We are making this rulebook available for only \$2.00; less than our cost! Setup is still free. Or players can still obtain the original version rules with one page of rule modifications free, but if you are seriously interested, I would definitely recommend the 2nd edition.

Some of the biggest changes in the 2nd edition include revised victory conditions, an improved galactic map, and more evenly balanced characters, wonders and artifacts. Four new secret societies have been added, and the bonuses for successfully traveling through a black hole have been thoroughly revised. Players can now send messages to the galaxy at large, scanner ranges are increased, and players receive bonuses for military tech levels exceeding 21. The length of the game now depends solely on how close it is - a blowout will end early, while a hard fought contest will last much longer. There are other changes too numerous to mention. All in all, this is a game you will want to check out. The original version was an award winner, and the 2nd edition is much better!

Lords of Destiny is the winner of the prestigious ORIGINS '93 "Best New PBM Game" award. It is a game of galactic empire building, legendary beings and cataclysmic battles. Players begin the game with control of

one homeworld and six starfleets. From this humble beginning, they must carefully maneuver starfleets, recruit and train powerful characters, invest in economic and military technology, and wisely build with their empire's resources to become the supreme power in the galaxy.

The players are not alone though, for many neutral empires with their own military forces and characters fill the galaxy, ranging from primitive cave men to extremely advanced elder races. Furthermore, there are many special locations in the galaxy such as black holes, training academies, secret societies, worm holes and the "seven wonders of the galaxy". Players will also discover powerful artifacts that are scattered throughout the galaxy. To win the game, a player must skillfully utilize all the above features, plus many, many more.

The turn fees for **Lords of Destiny** are an unbeatable \$4.50, with never any hidden or extra charges, and no double turns allowed. The rules are \$2 or free (see above), and the setup is FREE simply by writing to the address below. You will not find a better deal!

Into the Maelstrom is our fantasy game where 10 players compete to control the land of Venture. Each player begins the game with 10 leaders and 5 companies, with one additional member in each company. Players must march these companies around Venture, recruiting native creatures (some human, some

monsters, some so-called immortal) to increase their power. Inevitably there will be many battles fought along the way, where fearsome demonic creatures may be called in through extra-dimensional "gates" to aid the attacker, and awesome angelic beings can be summoned to aid the defender. The terrain a battle occurs in is very important, for the creatures have a much higher combat rating in their native terrain. Finally, there exist the mystical whirlpools, which a company may enter and journey to the unknown.

The turn fees for **Into the Maelstrom** are only \$3.50, with never any hidden or extra charges. A SPECIAL STARTUP PACKAGE of rules, setup and 2 turns is available free to anyone writing to us at the address below. This is a great game where players can concentrate on strategy rather than memorizing hundreds of rules.

Maelstrom Games

PO Box B

Welch Post Office

Ames, IA 50014

FAX: (515) 233-6484

MARGUERITE DIAS

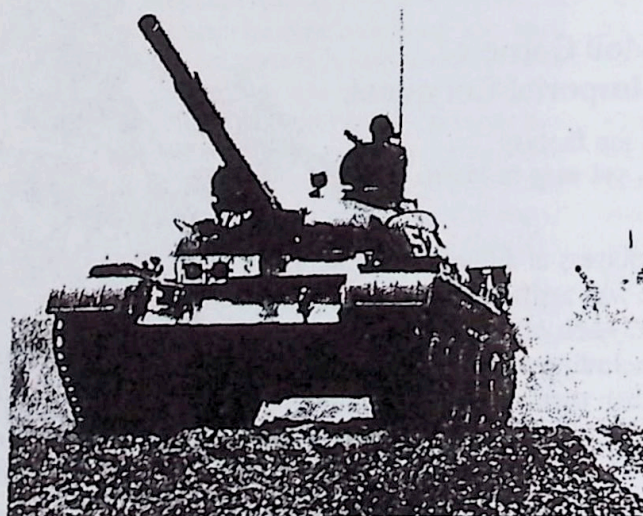
Are our Play-By-Mail games for everybody? No. Our PBM games do not attempt to be all things to all people. We design

THE COLD WAR IS NOT OVER!

Not in **El Mythico**, an exciting postal boardgame set in a fictional Central American country during the Cold War 70's. Superpower rivalry has plunged the country into anarchy. Up to 18 rival player factions wage a fierce guerrilla war to seize control of El Mythico. To win, a player must defeat his rivals, capture key installations, and gain the support of the local population.

GAME FEATURES:

- Military and economics
- Spies and assassinations
- 29 types of land units
- 16 types of air units
- 5 types of naval units
- Train units to elite status
- 70 missions and orders
- 56 page rulebook
- 18" x 28" full color map
- Plan actions at your leisure
- New opponents in every game
- Simultaneous hidden movement



How it works: Every two weeks each player receives a complete laser printed report of his action results, battles, unit status, and other information, along with a custom form for preparing orders for the next turn. A game takes about a year (30 turns) to play, if you can survive that long.

Costs: Rules and map \$10. If you decide not to play after reading rules, return the rules and map for a full refund. If you do decide to play, game entry is \$15 and \$6.50 per turn (about the cost of a book or movie every two weeks).

Players are enthusiastic: "I find the balance of military and economic content perfect and the tactical possibilities are endless. A real joy to play..."

(Colin Leversuch-Roberts in Flagship Magazine #47)

Write or call for a free brochure:

Graaf Simulations, P.O. Box 96, St. Clair Shores, MI 48080

Phone (810) 772-9595 or Fax (810) 772-9659; Visa and Mastercard accepted

Other postal games we offer: Feudal Lords, Continental Rails, Spiral Arm, Gameplan Football, PBM Supremacy, PBM Kings & Things*

games to entertain adults. Our fare is mature in content, sometimes dark in mood, sometimes extremely tense and is known to be bold, frank and explicit when the plot demands it. Although we never have released games strictly to shock or titillate, we do not tend to soften or censor the content either.

With this in mind, we insist on a written, signed statement from each new player attesting to the fact that he or she is 18 years of age or older. Without this statement on file, we will not permit an individual entry to any of our games. While some would readily point out that we are limiting the market for our PBM games, we simply do not want to take the risk of exposing impressionable adolescents to material which may be too mature or advanced for their consumption. Having said all this, let's go on to the latest and greatest news (grin).

"Kavernes", our PBM game of solo adventure of exploration, intrigue and the bizarre, continues to grow. Due to a combination of a compelling storyline and inexpensive pricing, Kavernes has proven to be a surprise to a great many people. Envision yourself as a character, in an act of desperation, seeking riches beyond compare in an underground labyrinth known only as the "Kavernes" where danger, wealth and knowledge is attainable for those who dare the unknown. Now envision a game that does not drain your bank account like a thirsty vampire on a midnight run. Kavernes requires merely \$5.00 to get started. That's right! You only need spend \$5.00 to get the rules, setup and two turns. Thereafter, Kavernes costs only \$1.50 for a three-action turn. In this day and age, we consider that a bargain.

And our low prices does not mean low quality. Kavernes is a game with laserprinted turns, high resolution graphics, stirring prose, unbridled imagination and a ten-day turn cycle. No one can equal, not to mention surpass, what we offer postal gamers. Naturally, you'll have to see it to believe it, but Kavernes is for real!

Here's what a few of the last entrants in Kavernes have had to say about the game:

"I really like your game so far. Looking forward to getting into the Kavernes." - Daniel Sippel

"Many thanks for the setup in Kavernes. It looks interesting! I enjoyed the Lovecraftian echoes in the opening scenario, and the creepy descriptions of the various mycotta (fungi's fun, as long as it's not from Yugoth)." - Frank White

"Very Lovecraftian. Beautiful description of carpet." - Walter McMannis

"Since I work with computers all day, it's nice to be able to 'get away' for a while into another world. I can see by my turn results that Kavernes will fill the bill quite nicely." - Irene Schofield

Take a chance, try Kavernes. You won't

be disappointed.

After a massive two-year redesign, our legendary fantasy roleplaying game, New Dawn, is out again. Players are once more embracing the awe and mystery of a world unlike anything they have ever seen before.

You might be asking: What is New Dawn all about? Envision an enormous island called Extraordinaire. On this expanse lies an intriguing mix of cultures--including such exotic races as the Amazon, Celt, Centaur, Dwarf, Elf, Harpy, Kzinti, Liont, Minotaur, Ogre, Orc, Ozz, Raccoon, Raght, Scorpio, Shroom, Stein, Troll, Vampyr, Wolfen, Weirwolf, Xorpion and Zulu. Characters in New Dawn can assume such fascinating skills as Alchemist, Archaeologist, Assassin, Carpenter, Druid, Engineer, Farmer, Gambler, Healer, Historian, Hunter, Linguist, Mason, Miner, Mystic, Necromancer, Physician, Psychic, Rancher, Scout, Sculptor, Slaver, Spy, Telepath, Thief, Tinker, Torturer, Tracker, Troubadour, Vintner, Weaver, Wizard and more, more, more. And, for the brave, characters can accept the calls of the gods with religions as diverse and mysterious as Aero, Damned, Earth, Emporium of Evil, Golden Hyena, Grey Man, Midnight, Pod, Seven Sisters, Sol, Sparta, Tarantula and Void.

Most people cannot begin to comprehend the depth of New Dawn. It is a world of enigmas, of realms where magic and mayhem assure characters that nothing is ever certain on the isle of Extraordinaire. Almost nothing is impossible, almost nothing is forbidden.

To understand the mystique of New Dawn, a person need only purchase the rules. For months and months we agonized over the layout and wording and illustrations for the New Dawn rulebook...until we got it just right. We feel the finished product--over 70 pages in length--makes for great reading. You will find concepts and descriptions that exist nowhere else. You will find a thoroughness that will fire your imagination. You will find a world in New Dawn where you--and the characters you create--can spend a lifetime of adventure and excitement, witnessing wonders and glories that never cease.

Joining New Dawn is simple enough. Rules are \$10.00. A setup is \$5.00. Turns, depending upon length and complexity, usually run the gamut of \$2.50 to \$5.50.

To become involved in New Dawn is to be immersed in a richly detailed game, highlighted by laserprinted turns, stunning maps, high quality illustrations, sophisticated prose, and plotlines that you will not find anywhere else on the Play-By-Mail scene. But if you have your doubts--and many do--then merely order the New Dawn rulebook. We think you'll be impressed by what you see. The New Dawn rules are second to none in terms of scope, thoroughness, and innovation!

Lastly, we come to "Cyberfringe"--our

"sleeper" game. The theme is a bit unusual. As the title would indicate, your character is part of a cyberpunk future--and the year is 2054. Nations are passe. Megacorporations control everything...except the Net where the rebels--the cyberfringe--exist, always just beyond the monopolistic grasp of the Suits.

Newcomers assume the role of a character who is given a HAL 4500 terminal--highly illegal--with which to enter the Earth Cybernetic Network and create who knows what kind of mischief. And the Suits are unhappy--in a big, big way. In fact, the Suits are so unhappy that they want you gone in a serious way--you're too intelligent, too inquisitive, too elusive, too independent. But it's not simple because the cyberfringe are anything but easy to stalk...and apprehend...or kill. Only the cyberfringe make the difference on a planet where an elaborate electronic tableau has infested and subverted every level of society.

Players are gradually becoming familiar with Cyberfringe. To become a part of a futuristic society of wirepirates, nerds, phreaks, netsurfers, silicon-worms, fingerdaemons, taphackers, swappers, phoneclones, giga-gurus, braindrainers, info-addicts, minor-servers, Trojan Horsehandlers, webwinders, rootcrackers, pixelzombies, cronos-cops, tronic-slackers, comp-trippers and dotswappers, you need only sign up. The rules for Cyberfringe are \$1.50. A setup is \$1.50. A turn is \$2.00. A double-turn is \$4.00.

Be a part of the Cyberfringe. Jack in and zone out! 2054 is hell, but it's the only hell you know.

To begin play in Kavernes, New Dawn or Cyberfringe, simply send us a check (made payable to "Marguerite Dias"), along with a signed statement indicating that you are of 18 years of age or older and then await the excitement of our adventures, soon to arrive at your mailbox. Once you indulge in our sophisticated games, Play-By-Mail will never seem the same again.

Marguerite Dias
1650 Sequoia Ave
Tracy, CA 95376

ROLLING THUNDER GAMES, INC

The staff of Rolling Thunder Games is going to be at this year's AndCon '94 PBM Convention and would like to invite all of you to show up. The convention is going to be this September in Independence, Ohio (near Cleveland) and will run for four days (Sept 15 - 18). Game conventions are always a lot of fun and this is a great chance to meet with us, ask questions, etc. Russ, Terry and Pete will all be there and we look forward to seeing you (and maybe getting together for a beer or two... <grin>!). We can provide details to all

those interested so give us a call.

Rolling Thunder Games has decided to opt out of its license agreement to run Roma Game's *Warriors & Wizards* game in the U.S. RTG will continue to run games already in progress but will not be setting up any new games.

Rolling Thunder Games, in order to provide better service to our customers, has added FAX service, a second phone line for our Thunder BBS and an optional VISA/Mastercard automatic payment plan. Full details are available in our *free* informational package.

Victory! Games #35 and #36 (one regular, one slow) have just set up and we now are accepting registrations for Games #37 and #38. There are some new rules going into effect with these games so if you are a veteran of an older game and would like to try something different, check it out. If you want into one of these games, get your registration form in today. Registration forms can be mailed in, faxed in or uploaded to our BBS and, if need be, we can even accept dictated registration information on the phone. Be sure to specify your preference (regular or slow). If you are interested in a special game of some kind, just let us know and we'll see what we can do.

For those of you who haven't experienced

the award-winning **Victory!** game system, here's a short description of the game (**The Battle For Europe** is the first scenario in the **Victory!** line):

The Battle For Europe uses a tremendous array of World War II era units and is set in the European theatre of operations. 40 players take command of individual nations, attempting to wrest control of territory from other heads of state through diplomacy, treachery and combat. Success in the game is achieved as a result of survival through manifest destiny. Skill, guts and a bit of luck are all important in the titanic battles of survival as nations strive to be the last one standing; the undisputed master of Europe!

The Battle For Europe is a combat game of unrivaled intensity and depth. A huge variety of units are represented in the game including everything from Messerschmitt Bf-109s fighters (of several types) and Handley Page Lancasters to Lavochkin La-7s and Boeing B-29 Superfortresses (yes, even the ME-262 jets are available, in both fighter & fighter-bomber versions). U.S. Essex class fleet carriers, Russian T-34s (in several versions), German Bismarck class battleships and British Sherman Fireflies. If the equipment saw active duty, it's in the game! The level of detail in **Victory!** is incredible. You'll have to see it to believe it. Information

packages are *free* and you can also obtain the complete rules off our BBS (also for *free*). If you have specific questions and want to talk to someone, just give us a call. We are always happy to answer questions, etc. Rolling Thunder Games is also active on CompuServe and can be reached in the PBMGAMES forum (GO PBMGAMES) at 71370,2707.

You'll see why **Victory!** blows everything else out of the water. If you've been looking for the finest in wargames at a very reasonable price (\$6.00 per turn, no combat fees, no monthly fees), give this game a shot. You will not be sorry!

The **Victory!** rules package is \$15.00 and includes a 120-page rulebook, combat, weather and terrain effect charts, a 58 page sectional map and a 90-page order supplement book. The entire package is mailed by Priority Mail so you won't have to wait long. A single-piece **Victory!** wall map is also available. The wall map is *optional* and is only \$8.00 (36" x 44", blackline print, tube-mailed). **Victory!** Turn Entry front-end programs are available to players in both MAC & DOS versions (no cost). These programs are great player aids that make it easier to do your turn. They reduce both player and GM errors. They are available, on disk or by modem off our BBS, to **Victory!** players. **Victory!** rules and the order supplement are also available on our

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ADVENT GAMES

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THUNDER.BBS (and there is no on-line charge for using the BBS!).

Super Nova: Rise Of The Empire: is currently under development and, alas, is probably not going to be available until early 1995. This game is going to be *big* and all you spacegamers out there are going to want to be in on this one! We'll be putting out more information as the year goes along so stay tuned. Information on SN:ROTE can also be obtained by calling up our BBS where we are currently working with a playtest group. We have a message board on the BBS set aside for SN:ROTE and you can read ongoing discussions, ask questions and/or give us your input. SN:ROTE, we believe, is going to be the most advanced empire-building, exploration and space-warfare game around. The game will have just about everything! By the way, if you are planning on attending this year's AndCon '94 in September, we will be passing out the latest information on SN:ROTE at the convention.

The THUNDER Bulletin Board System now features a second line (to reduce those busy signals...). Just call the same number as before 303-466-8681. If the first line is busy, the system will automatically roll you over to line 2. You won't even notice the switch (Line 1 has a new Hayes Optima 288 [28,800] modem; Line 2 has a Hayes Optima 144 (14,400) so those of you with fast modems shouldn't see any dropoff in performance with either line). The system has already fielded over 60,000 calls! Feel free to log on! (Set modem to 8-N-1). Anybody with a modem can access THUNDER at no charge and the BBS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Download the rules and turn-entry programs for **Victory! The Battle For Europe** and/or simply look around. **Victory!** turns can be uploaded (and the results downloaded) to/from THUNDER. Ask for info!

The RTG FAX line is a new service that we just put into operation this last February. Currently, we use the same line during normal office hours for both voice and FAX (we'll pick up as normal for an incoming voice call and the FAX machine will take it if it is an incoming FAX). The RTG FAX line remains active 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (if you are calling after normal office hours, FAX service is available) and there is no extra charge for using this service.

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SHADOW ISLAND GAMES

Olympia is a new open-ended

fantasy PBEM which has just left playtest and "gone commercial". It has been in development on the Internet since 1991, where over 200 playtesters were able to try it out and make suggestions.

Olympia is played by electronic mail only. This keeps costs down, which means turn fees are lower--only US\$2.50/turn, no matter how many orders you send in. Eventhough it has simultaneous turn execution, email lets turns run at a brisk rate of once per week.

Players will save money too, since conducting diplomacy via email is much cheaper than making phone calls, especially when coordinating with allies in different countries.

Each player controls a small group of nobles, who in turn may lead commoners. Nobles may fight, build ships and castles, explore, trade, slay monsters, study skills such as construction, beastmastery or combat, and research spells in the six schools of magic.

Olympia's map is vast, and the game is capable of supporting thousands of players in the same world.

Lots of free information is available through email, including the rules, back issues of The Olympia Times, a sample turn, and a helpful "Getting started in Olympia" article. Log in now and send us a note!

Shadow Island Games

PO Box 6435

Somerset, NJ 08875-6435

Phone: (908) 469-1992

Internet: info@pbm.com

SUDDEN ASYLUM

Playtest is currently being completed for both the paper and EMail version of Sudden Asylum's **SpyKor**. **SpyKor** is a game of corporate warfare in the next century when huge, multi-nationals (Kors) replace government as we know it and strive for domination. A game has eight players, each of which takes on the role of the CEO for one of the Kors. The player decides what type of company (s)he will play (aeronautics, importing, drug cartel, communications, etc) and what the Kor's special ability will be. These are currently undergoing change, but could include increased technology, extra resource production, additional spy actions or others. Each Kor also begins with 1 spy and 1 diplomat (rep). The CEO names these individuals and applies points to various skills for them. These characters are used extensively in **SpyKor** so this can be a crucial part of a position's set-up. Want to be a rogue Kor with nothing but anarchy in mind? Set your spy up as a master assassin and your rep as a brainwasher par excellence. Want to be a bit more subtle, perhaps? Have your spy start out as a high-tech undercover thief. Your rep might focus on falsifying stock market

records, destroying some economics and sending yours through the roof.

At the game's outset, players have a lone city under their command, complete with a standard army and air force. From then on, they decide how best to destroy the 7 rival Kors. While **SpyKor** is a wargame, there are numerous economic and civic factors involved. First, there is an extensive stock market represented. The stocks in the market rise and fall depending on several factors, one of the most important being the proximity of war to their headquarters. Another factor which can influence the stock market is how well (or badly) the CEO builds up his or her Kor's industry. It's one thing to flaunt naked aggression, but, being a corporation, Interpol and the rest of the world at some point or another expect you to market a product. Failure to build up your industry can result in deflated stock values, not to mention massive unemployment and a lack of incoming cash. The civilians must be employed, fed, and, to a lesser extent, bribed with all sorts of frivolous luxuries (like running water) or they will grow discontented. If you continue on a blatantly militaristic path or if you overtax, this discontent will increase rapidly. This will lead to strikes and the slowdown of farming and mining, 2 activities which are necessary to keep your Kor operating. **SpyKor** is interesting in this respect in that you will need to use some military activity to win the game, but there are significant penalties involved for doing so.

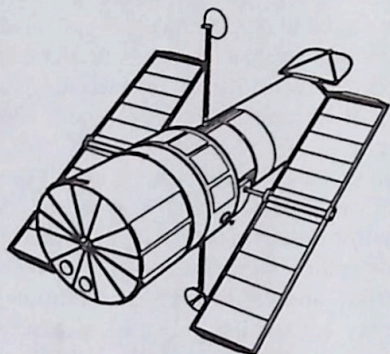
Another of the unique features of **SpyKor** is the method by which spy/rep/CEO actions are done. Because of the heavy penalties associated with military undertaking, these characters' activities are critical to a Kor's success. Spies can assassinate other characters, sabotage enemy military units or tech research plants, destroy entire cities, steal stocks, credits, tech, and mineral ore as well as provide information on another Kor's spy structure. Reps can convert rival spies or reps to their Kors, ally cities to their cause, manipulate the stock market, purge their ranks looking for double spies, invest in organized crime or donate to charities, buy or sell stocks, or calm (crush?) civilian uprisings. CEOs meanwhile can set production levels for their cities, attempt to enhance ore production, build up industry or (ever popular) unleash plague on enemy cities. All in all, there are over 50 character actions a player can do each turn.

A Kor can win the game by several methods. First, the most obvious, they can be the sole remaining power in the game, the others having been wiped out. Second, they can amass a Net Worth of 100,000 Credits (the money unit used in the game). Third, they can meet private victory conditions which necessitate certain map sectors and stocks they must own. One loses the game by ending a turn without controlling any sectors, having a

Public Relations (PR) rating of 0 (this is an abstract rating of how the world perceives your Kor) or allowing your Net Worth to drop below 1,000 Credits.

If you like your wargames to be heavily seasoned with economic factors, meaningful characters, and a lot of fast-paced skullduggery, *SpyKor* may be for you. Pricing policies are still being worked out, but prices are expected to run around \$5.00/turn. For more information or to sign up early for a game (\$10 credit), write to:

Mike Childress
Sudden Asylum
1401 Gatlinburg Drive
Pflugerville, TX 78660
CompuServe: 76066,2230



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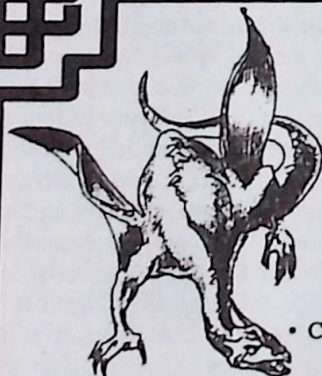
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 - f. initial economic strength (# and type of Population Centers)
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PBM FICTION: WHY WRITE IT, WHY READ IT, WHO NEEDS IT?

By Shannon Muir

With three PBM fiction stories under my belt (CTF 2187's "Test of Loyalty" in Issue #55 and "Trials of Friendship" in Issue #64; also Portinium's "Spice of Life" in Issue #65)--and working on what may be my first 2-issue CTF 2187 tale--I decided to take an introspective look at why anyone should write or read fiction based on Play-By-Mail games. My intent with this article is mainly to provoke thought, but perhaps provide stimulation for discussion as well.

I remember reading once (in a letter to the editor from Paper Mayhem #62) that in order to enjoy a PBM game, there must be more to it than just filling out paperwork turn after turn--that we pay for our turns "to unlock a door to our imagination, to give us a precious, if brief, respite from the daily grind...the printout is a catalyst, our minds is [sic] where the game is played." I tend to agree with this opinion. It seems that in many of the most popular games, there is some way for the players to bring a bit of their own imagination into the essence of the game as shared by a large group or ALL of a game's players, though the medium may not be directly supported by the moderators.

In the two games in which I have the most experience--Advanced Gaming Enterprises' CTF 2187 and Portinium (discontinued by Enchanted Horizons in early 1994, and is still eager to find someone interested in licensing it)--the avenue was the monthly game newsletter published by the company. In CTF 2187, all players have the ability to submit "Player Notices" to the monthly newsletter, which can develop the personalities of their characters while exchanging information or commentary on a specific game and/or other player's characters. Portinium took things a step further in that players could write their own news stories for a "World News" column in the monthly newsletter; the tales were not required to necessarily reflect game play and often tended to be of a humorous nature. In either case, new ideas can be raised that have the potential to gain support from others; if these concepts are embraced, they can become essential but 'unofficial' game elements. A good example are the hangouts in CTF 2187 where Pilots reportedly take a break between Arenas. At the moment, there are two mainstays: Mother's Place and Bot Med (the latter location I had a hand in creating; for more details on this competition, see my article in

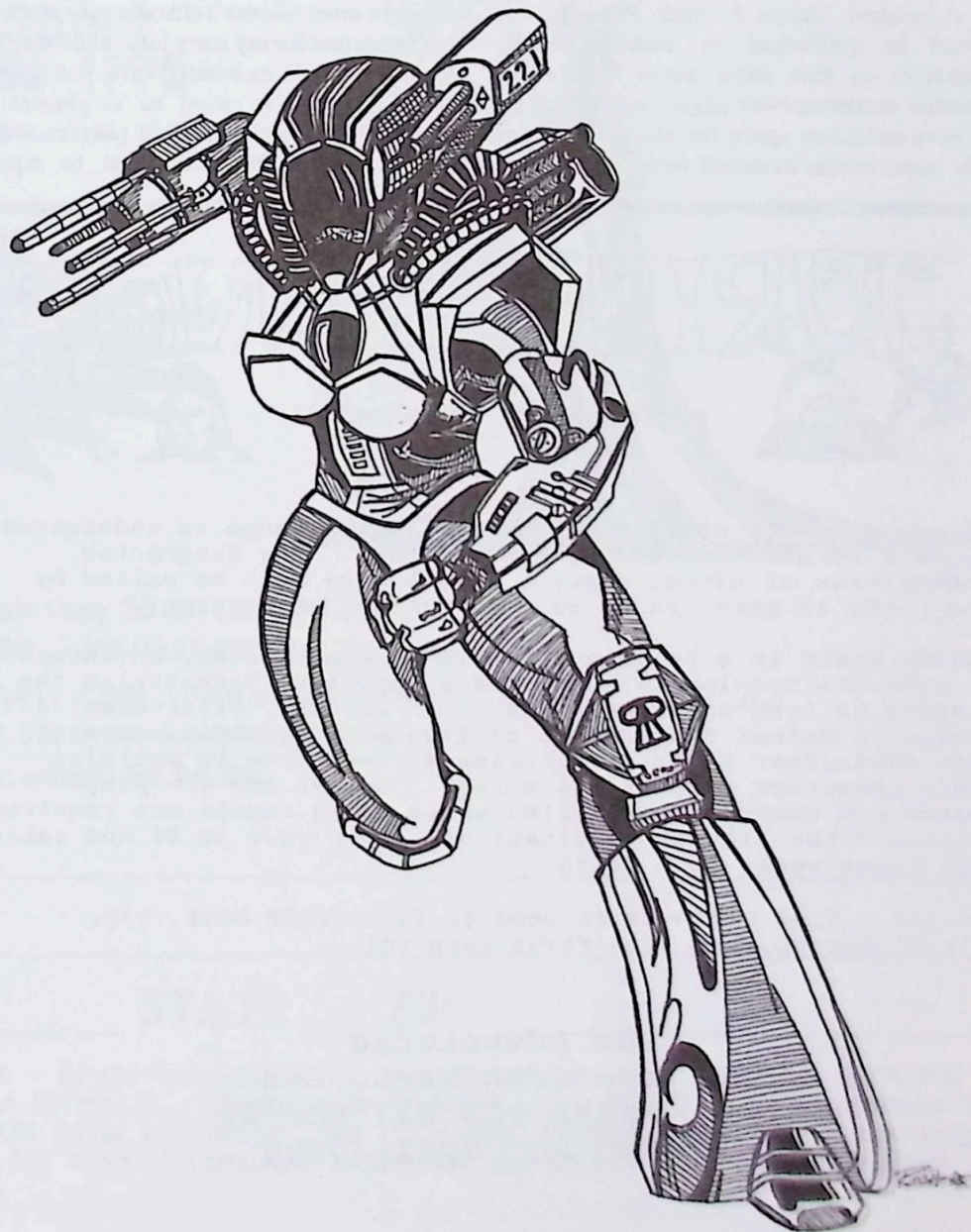
Issue #58). Point is, neither of them would be continually intertwined into the newsletter if other players didn't choose to use them.

Some players--brought together under a unifying factor, such as a race or team affiliation--have started their own newsletters when they feel a game's outlets are insufficient to meet their needs. Such was the case when my father served as editor of the FET's newsletter (a trading organization in Adventures By Mail's Beyond the Stellar Empire--Original Version) for a period in the mid-80s. Another scenario involved my own publication of a Sisters of Silicon newsletter

to address the issues of women Pilots in CTF 2187, a niche' area that I thought needed coverage despite the fact Advanced Gaming Enterprises had their own newsletter.

Though this may at first have seemed like digression, I needed to raise these points to bring things to a central question: If such outlets can be created, why is there a need to publish PBM fiction in magazines like Paper Mayhem or Flagship?

I believe there are three reasons that fiction published in PBM magazines is effective. First, it can serve to inform a reader not familiar with a certain game by giving him/her



a feel of what its like before deciding to get involved; strategy-and-tactic articles can explain mechanics, but can rarely give an idea of what happens when multiple factors of a game are executed in tandem, or carry the 'flavor' of the game as supported by background information developed by the moderators. That was one of the main purposes of my own "Test of Loyalty" and "Spice of Life," but also seems to be the main thrust of such stories as: "The Wand is Mightier Than The Sword" (Alamaze 89, #44), "How To Capture A Robotic Base" (The Next Empire, #46), "The Marquee" (Gladiators of Death, #64) and Daniel P. Lewandowski's continuing saga of "Legends: Realm of the Immortals" (#51, #53, #55, etc.). An example: I know of one person whose close friend kept trying to talk her into joining CTF 2187, but she wasn't really convinced until reading "Test of Loyalty"; I never met her until she joined the game and ultimately became one of the SISTERS OF SILICON. I hope situations like this have happened as the result of other's stories as well.

A second reason I think PBM fiction should be published in wide-circulation magazines is that most game newsletters (whether moderator—or player-published) do not have sufficient space for players to share their experiences in detail with others in the

same game. Many of the stories cited above serve this function, as well, as do tales that emphasize characters over game play; a few examples of those are: "The Cave of Deeth Kar" (#47), "The Suicide King" (#48), "The Arrival of Doom" (#59), "The Foolish Child" (also #59) and "The Graverobber" (#66). The advantage of fiction over a fact-based article is that being bombarded with a lot of description and details has the potential to be "dry" reading. A story format is a more exciting way of getting the ideas across, as well as, weaving in the types of character development detailed above.

The last reason I want to cite is that I think PBM fiction is probably the best way to tie together different game details developed by a game's players and synergize them. On this point, I cannot speak of others' stories, because I am not familiar with the games—but I know that this is something I personally strive for in every story, especially "Trials of Friendship," in which almost no factors of game play effected the story's outcome. I sift through all the back newsletters and look for scattered comments people have made about mine (or other players') characters or ideas that are important for my story idea, and I stay true to those details in what I write. A game's "world," as I've tried to emphasize, is ultimately the creation of all players and by that I think their ideas must be equally

respected. In the end, these facts are woven into the context of ONE story, where their relationship to each other is made clear. Sometimes there are gaps in details or descriptions that need to be defined—so I wind up making these additions on my own.

Now, I'd like to give a little insight into how I personally approach doing a PBM fiction story. Three main factors effect how I design my stories, and I will list them below followed by descriptions of specific elements that have come into play while creating my current work-in-progress for CTF 2187.

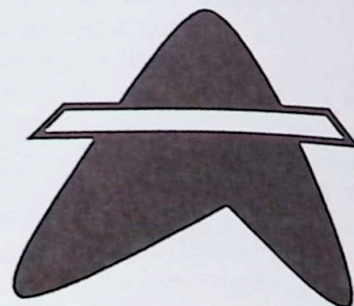
1. **PLAYER'S NOTICES:** I had already submitted a notice on the marriage of Femme Fatale and Racubus Sterling, two of my Pilots. The story explores how that decision came about for these characters. Also playing a role is information regarding how an uncommon relative of SISTER OF SILICON Lauraic Vileslayer and BLOODGUARD member Loric Vileslayer caused Lauraic's part of the family theocracy to be disowned; the background for this plot was developed through newsletter banter between myself and another player.

2. **GAME EVENTS:** I had already planned on Femme Fatale ejecting from her then-current Arena. What I DID NOT anticipate was that another Sisters member (Feral Feline) would die the same turn. This posed interesting possibilities for my story and was incorporated.

3. **CHANCE:** I asked the GMs for a non-active BLOODGUARD character that had been orphaned because I needed someone from that organization for my story. I gave them no preference or idea of what I was doing. They sent me Derrick Deathex, who had been leader of the subteam that tried to kill H.A.L. Mayne in "Test of Loyalty." This too has played an important role in the story.

That brings to a close my discussion on PBM fiction. I'm glad to see other people out there writing PBM fiction, and I encourage you to keep up the work! The only thing I'd personally like to encourage is for fiction writers to somehow identify the game that's being written about. I've read some great stories with no clue what the game is, and I would love to know who to contact so I can find out more.

Best of gaming to you all!



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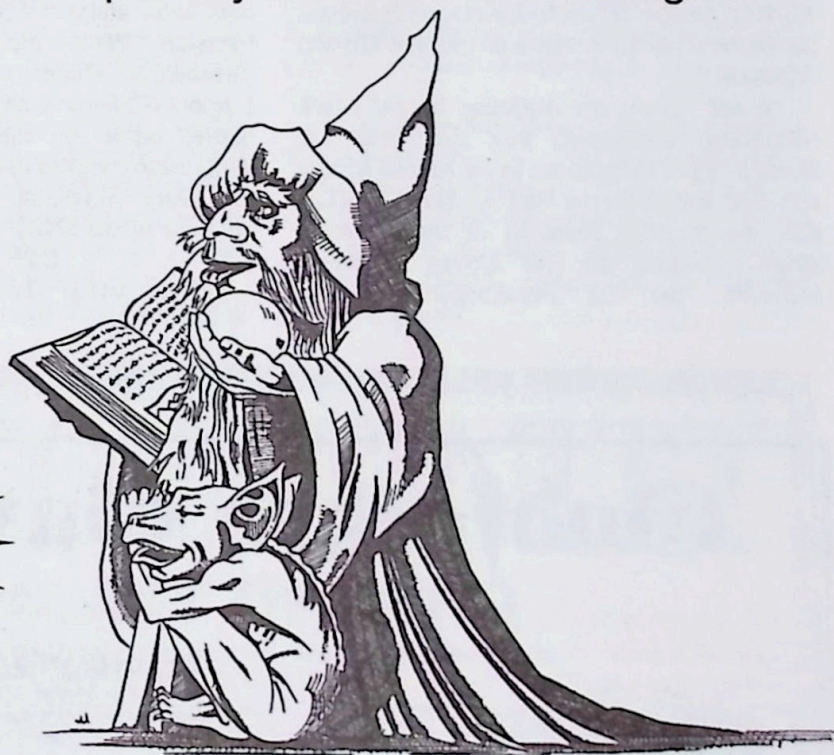
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PBM ACTIVITY CORNER

ADVANCED GAMING ENTERPRISES Crack of Doom

Though it has been rumored that the Terminator-Kodan Raman war is over, both factions continue to battle various foes as life in the East remains hazardous. This month's battles in the East included:

In the Black Mountains the 1st Freakazoid (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs), Mosutha (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs) and Mental Militia (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs) attacked and destroyed the once mighty army known as Them (Lawful Dwarves). In virtually the same area at nearly the same time the 1st Kodan Division (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs) and Karlis (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs) destroyed Salvation (Lawful Humans of the New Crystal Alliance).

Weeks later, the fighting in the Black Mountains continued, this time near the Human city of Brigadoom as the Mental Militia attacked and defeated Bad As Budusky (Lo-Kee worshipping Humans of the Monsties alliance) while the 1st Kodan Division, Mosutha, the 1st Freakazoid and the

Longhaired Humanoids (Chaotic Kodan Raman Orcs) all but destroyed the Rum Runners (Lo-Kee worshipping Humans of the Karada Brotherhood) despite a valiant defense. Shortly thereafter Manslaughter Ring (Chaotic LOOT Gnolls) finished off the Rum Runners in a painfully lopsided battle.

Elsewhere in the East the Snake Eaters (Chaotic Kodan Raman Lizara) continued their bombardment of the beleaguered Elven city of Lorvina. Without prompt and substantial aid it looks like the city will soon fall. Also at Lorvina the 1st Prong-Exciter (Chaotic Kodan Raman Gnolls) devastated the Believers of Aldaryn (Lawful Lizara), a battle in which both sides adopted Missile Tactics. On the Estarian Plain the Wyraxian (Lawful Terminator Giants) defeated the Lupine Legion (Chaotic Gnolls) in a close fought battle, while on the Vivatian Plain the Wolverine Psychos (Gnolls) all but destroyed the Fury Bowmen (Wicca worshipping Humans of the SNAP alliance).

CTF 2187

Game #183: Turn #7 saw Side #2

maintaining their hold on the lead as both teams continue to score well. Side #1 attempted to make up ground by pounding the enemy CP but to no avail. However the CP was eventually destroyed by Captain Dutchman Too who finished it off with a Mini Missile strike from his Hornet (his first CP kill, by the way, after completing 8 previous contests). It looks as though the rest of the contest will be a battle of attrition with at least 5 Bots now close to destruction.

Turn #8 saw little change in the comparative ratings as both teams continue to score well. It looks like it is going to be a tough game for the Pilots in Light Bots as most are now close to destruction and seem unlikely to survive the contest. The best Bot Victory Rating is 5.60.

Game #184: Turn #7 saw both teams continuing to score well. Side #1 was able to expand their lead somewhat as the battle remains intense. Much of the fighting seems to be breaking down into vicious one-on-one duels that are usually devastating to the participants. Even the one-on-CP duels are proving costly as both CPs continue to inflict significant amounts of damage in their own defense. The best Bot Victory Rating is 4.38.

Game #187: Turn #7 saw Side #2, the only team remaining with a functional CP, continuing to move up in the ratings as they are now within striking distance of the lead. The contestants are gathering for the final showdowns--one in the southwest corner of the map (Dir. 6) and the other near the ruins of CP #4. A number of Bot casualties are expected in the coming turns.

Turn #8 saw Side #4 expanding their lead as most teams, rather unexpectedly at this late stage in the game, scored quite well this turn. Cadet Granny Kantrill, that feisty old crone with a sharp eye and nerves of steel, scored her second Bot Kill of the game as she took out Cadet Clark Kent's Gnat with a heavy Machine Cannon burst from her Devastator. Side #3 has now lost 2/3rds of their team and their remaining Pilot looks like he is in for quite a pounding before this contest is over. The best Bot Victory Rating is 4.13.

ANARCHY BY MAIL

Galactic Anarchy

Game #49 - the battles are beginning to rage on. Turn 10 reveals that two major alliances have been formed with a few unfortunate stragglers lingering. Unusual as it sounds, but the two "sides" are currently in a cooperative state, which won't last for long! With both sides being fairly equivalent in both size and strength, this should make a very interesting game in the end. A small handful

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of neutral systems still exist, as well as a very limited supply of neutral fleets. Only about 19,000 more points to go...

Game #52 - positions are currently being filled. Contact us ASAP if you want to join in the fun!

BATTLE-MAGIC GAMING

Atlantrix

Obituaries: On Block 248, Sarakon Polidias #337 triumphed over Euroq #656 in a Death Challenge in order to win his 5th Star.

A 3rd Star was earned by Blood #313 after he defeated Rafeal #042 in an Arena Match. He graduated from Gladiator School as well.

Jacob Swift #398 earned his 2nd Star by defeating Pau Ming #041 in another Glad School Arena Match.

Other News: Lone Wolf #314 and Kalina #577 slew 4 Pirates off of Block 161 before they were seen disappearing into a cave. There has been no further word on the two and they are feared dead.

A lunatic flying person who calls himself Tomato Man has been vegetabbling and otherwise harassing people. Any information on him would be appreciated.

Ryngaard Nightwatch #383 slew 3 ghouls as he was passing through Block 255.

Blood #313 and Crowbard #571 encountered a Werewolf as they were traveling through Block 277. The mayor advises caution in this area of town.

Lost Archipelagos News: While exploring part of these islands, Bruno #350 and Ilyxia #530 killed 3 Mummies. Also, the above two, along with Sterling #310 and Dunkirk #132 killed a Large Animated Dragon.

Dragon News: Speaking of Animated Dragons, Logan #376 and Tura #625 killed a Small One on Block 30 while they were going along.

Milo lost a leg while he was slaying a Medium Green Dragon. The incident occurred on Block 50.

Trewana Greeneyes #370 and Parr #533 saw a Large Grey Dragon as they went through a choking fog on Block 180.

Likewise, Marix #341 and Yana #174 encountered a Small Grey Dragon and another choking fog on Block 250.

Talon Hawkfist #362 and Cyann #234 finally defeated a Small Grey Dragon. It died from impaling itself on Talon's sword. For quite some time after the incident, a rather foul odor was smelled coming from Talon.

Jemina #302 and Dirk #420 killed a Large Green Dragon on a Western Beach after pursuing it across most of Atlantrix.

An unfortunate Medium Sea Dragon interrupted the honeymoon voyage of Jarl Ster #354 to Marta, the Carpet Maker (Blk 109). The voyage continued after a short while when he had dispatched the beast.

Ceaser #308 encountered a Medium Blue

Dragon while he was walking through Block 180. The mayor advises everyone to avoid this block.

Forgotten Island News: Blackwatch #435, Tara #239, Dreamweaver #413 and Tina #590 slew 4 Jackals that were king for a few good fighters.

Angus Long March #427, Arion Star Bow #356, Cymbaline #629 and Ra #638 slew a Giant Slug before entering the dungeon.

Genesis #377, Chip Endale #397, Noro Sirdan #580 and Rastilin #604 fought some Lizard Men as they explored a Shipwreck.

Into Infinity

Phi News: Krall conquered 2 Khatovar colonies. Krall & Khatovar fleets battled over a Khatovar colony, the Krall fleet was victorious.

Beta News: Valkyrian conquered 3 Dark Lords colonies. Valkyrian conquered 5 New Wave colonies. Royal Court conquered a Dark Lords colony. Royal Court conquered 2 New Wave colonies.

Gamma News: Haunt of the Unholy conquered a Heechee colony. Imperial Empire conquered 17 Haunt of the Unholy colonies. Haunt of the Unholy conquered a Heechee colony then a Heechee fleet reacted in and destroyed the Haunt of the Unholy fleet. Haunt of the Unholy and Heechee fleets

clashed in a joint star system, both sides took moderate damage and the battle runs into it's 3rd turn of combat. Haunt of the Unholy conquered an Imperial colony.

Epsilon News: Realm of the Undead conquered a Quilton colony. Arcadia (Theta) conquered 3 Union of Heavenly Peace colonies. Arcadia conquered a Sky Seeker's colony.

Zeta News: VAM destroyed a Hellhathno fleet and a Roman Empire fleet. VAM conquered 11 Iskandar colonies. VAM conquered 13 Roman Empire colonies. Demoncaust conquered 2 Iskandar colonies.

Eta News: Magna destroyed a Turtleoids fleet. Magna attacked a Turtleoids colony but couldn't breach it's heavy defenses. Magna conquered 3 Holy Crusade colonies.

Omicron News: Camelot conquered 3 Forest colonies. Valkyrian (Beta) conquered a Mupy Mup (Upsilon) colony. Octagon conquered a Barboskus Presidium (Kappa) colony. Vixen conquered 2 Mupy Mup colonies.

Upsilon News: Rivan (Iota) conquered 4 Mupy Mup colonies. Octagon conquered 4 Mupy Mup colonies. Vixen (Omicron) conquered 4 Mupy Mup colonies. Otto (Iota) conquered 2 Sardonic Nihilists colonies. Valkyrian (Beta) conquered a Sardonic Nihilists colony.

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Ruby News: Vespider conquered a Drakcirian colony. Orca (Diamond) conquered 2 Lightstorm colonies. Vestiva conquered a Drakcirian colony. Vespider conquered a Darkonian colony. Orca conquered a Darkonian colony.

Spinel News: Mists of Avalon destroyed a Xanadu fleet. Xanadu conquered 2 Mists of Avalon colonies. Xanadu conquered a Snake in the Grass colony. Cyland conquered 3 Black Paladin colonies. Cyland conquered an Andromedians (Quartz) colony.

Jacinth News: Diamond Orchard conquered 2 Platinum Paladin colonies. Diamond Orchard conquered 2 Armagedon colonies. Creeps (Aquamarine) conquered 2 Draconian colonies. Creeps conquered a Fringed Avengers colony. Creeps conquered an Armagedon colony. Fringed Avengers conquered 2 Aedan colonies.

Peridot News: Kzinti Nation destroyed Irish Republic's last fleet, destroying this empire.

Amethyst News: Wolf Pack conquered a Troll Trooper colony. Wolf Pack conquered 4 Steel Vipers colonies. Wolf Pack conquered an Avengers colony. Falcon's Flight destroyed a Master's of Reality fleet. Wolf Pack conquered a Master's of Reality colony. Falcon's Flight conquered a Master's of Reality colony.

Emerald News: Kings of the Ryche conquered a Zorn Lords colony. Zorn Lords attacked a Diamond Dawning colony and bounced off heavy defenses. Ixion and Zorn Lords attacked the Myrilla HSS and captured the HW and 2 colonies. Myrilla (E448) has now become a Nomad. Myrilla conquered an Ixion colony. Kings of the Ryche conquered an Ixion colony.

Garnet: Loviatar conquered a Quintonian colony. Eforsians conquered a Satakian colony but a Satakian fleet reacted in and destroyed the Eforsians fleet in 2 turns of battle. Satakian conquered an Eforsians colony. Quintonian conquered a Loviatar colony.

Obsidian News: There are new players for Emps 470, 474 & 478. Quintonian (Garnet) conquered a Tristar colony. Quintonian conquered 2 Toaster colonies. Witan conquered a Toaster colony. Witan conquered a Tristar colony. Satakian (Garnet) conquered a Toaster colony. Punisher (Garnet) conquered 2 Toaster colonies. Lumber Jack destroyed all of Kitaer in Triads fleets in one massive space battle, destroying this empire. Tristar and Witan fleets met in a massive space battle, both sides took moderate losses. Valhalla (470) destroyed a Toaster fleet.

Algol - ROMULUS: Koriath Confedera-

tion conquered the Preatorian HW. Koriath Confederation conquered 3 Preatorians colonies. Hellrazor conquered a Preatorians colony. Kheta Sect conquered 4 Sinistar colonies. Hellrazor conquered a Sinistar colony. Hellrazor conquered a XX'an Corporate colony.

Capella News: Emp 519 has been renamed "Man o' War". Therrangi & Magic Masters fleets battled it out over a Black Planet, both fleets took moderate losses. Therrangi & Vodani Nation fleets attacked Magic Masters fleets, the battle rages...Vodani Nation destroyed a Halls of Magic fleet.

Deneb News: Murky Buckets destroyed the last Kirlain empire fleet, destroying this empire.

Mizar News: Mizar is filled and on a 10 day cycle. A Stargazer's fleet attacked a Crimson Python fleet, both fleets took moderate damage with Stargazer's getting a little worst of the battle.

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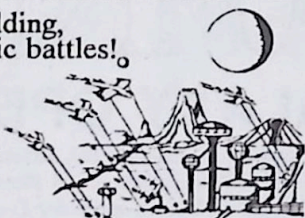
In Playtest #3, Turn 3, the action continued as the Federation player began to realize the desperate situation he had placed himself in by his inactivity during the first 2 turns and he started attempts to stave off virtually certain defeat. He was still counting on the economic

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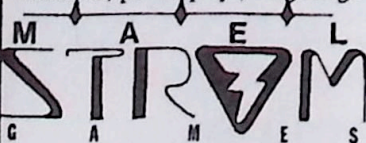
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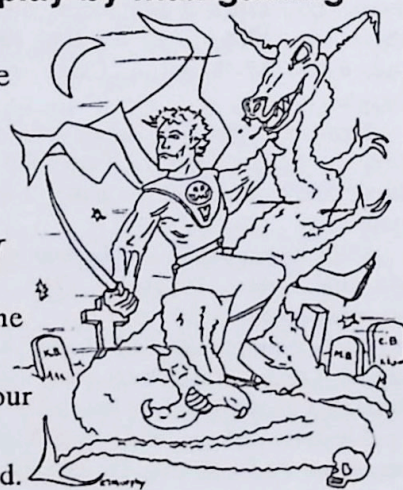
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might of the Federation to save him after only 4 months of nearly-constant war (it was beginning to become obvious that his remaining fleet was not going to be able to do the job). The Gorn Confederation player continued to apply relentless pressure on the Federation as did the Klingon player, and other players began to look at what Federation territory they might be able to bite off as well.

Turn #3, Week 1 opened with a Klingon fleet of 19 capital ships attacking a lone Federation battlestation. The Klingon fleet carved the battlestation up like a Christmas turkey losing only 1 frigate crippled and 1 slightly damaged. At virtually the same moment another Klingon fleet of 11 capital ships and 6 fast patrol ships attacked another lone Federation battlestation, blowing it out of space, but losing 3 patrol ships destroyed in the process.

Week 2 opened with a Tholian Holdfast fleet of 9 capital ships attacking a Klingon fleet of 11 capital ships, 1 carrier and 6 fighters. The Tholians won the engagement, destroying all of the Klingon ships and fighters, but losing 1 cruiser, 1 escort cruiser, 1 patrol cruiser, 1 scout and 1 minesweeper destroyed, and 1 new heavy cruiser crippled and another crippled and nearly destroyed (82% damage).

Week 2 also bore witness to a Gorn attack on a lone Federation battlestation along the Gorn-Federation frontier. The Gorn 12th and 13th Strike Groups attacked the battlestation with 28 capital ships, 24 fast patrol ships and 8 fighters, quickly overwhelming the defenders who fought a desperate, but hopeless battle rather than surrender their station. Gorn losses were 2 fighters and 1 fast patrol ship destroyed with many other ships suffering minor damage.

In Week 3, the Gorn 22nd and 23rd Strike Groups struck at another Federation battlestation with 21 capital ships, 1 carrier, 14 fast patrol ships and 8 fighters. The battlestation fell quickly, but took 3 Gorn fighters and 1 fast patrol ship down with it while doing minor damage to several Gorn capital ships. The Gorns also hit a Federation fleet in Sector 15-18/12 with the combined 62nd and 63rd Strike Groups. The Gorn fleet numbered 30 capital ships, 2 carriers, 18 fast patrol ships and 8 fighters. Federation defending forces consisted of 1 starbase, 10 capital ships, 2 strike carriers, 6 police cruisers and 24 fighters. When the smoke cleared, the Federation forces had been entirely destroyed, but the Gorns had lost 2 destroyers, 1 minesweeper, 2 battletugs, 1 heavy destroyer escort, 1 battle destroyer, 1 battle destroyer leader, 18 fast patrol ships and 8 fighters destroyed, 2 heavy destroyers, 1 battle destroyer and 1 heavy destroyer escort crippled and 1 battle destroyer heavily damaged (22%), but not crippled. These were the heaviest losses of the war so far for the Gorn Confederation.

Week 4 saw another strike against the Federation by the Interstellar Concordium (ISC). An ISC echelon force of 5 capital ships engaged Federation Task Force 6.1 which consisted of 8 capital ships, 1 carrier and 12 fighters. Two ISC light cruisers were destroyed and 1 was crippled while Federation losses were 2 destroyer escorts, 1 escort cruiser, 1 heavy cruiser and 12 fighters destroyed, plus 1 carrier and 1 destroyer leader crippled. The remnants of the ISC fleet withdrew.

Week 4 also saw action, finally, by the Hydrans with a Hydran raid into Kzinti territory. The Hydran Kingdoms Squadron 2B and 3A, consisting of 26 capital ships, 1 carrier, 12 fast patrol ships and 44 fighters staged a long-range raid through Klingon space into Kzinti territory and attacked a Kzinti Hegemony fleet of 7 capital ships. The Hydrans lost 39 fighters and 3 fast patrol ships destroyed before withdrawing back across the Klingon-Kzinti border in Klingon space. Kzinti losses were 2 strike cruisers, 2 light cruisers and 3 frigates destroyed.

In Week 5, the Klingon Empire launched a major assault on the Kzinti Hegemony with 4 fleets simultaneously attacking a Kzinti outpost on the Klingon-Kzinti border. The Klingons attacked with 57 capital ships, 1 carrier, 2 light carriers, 6 fast patrol ships and 24 fighters. The Kzinti defenders possessed 16 capital ships, 1 carrier, 1 light carrier, 1 escort carrier, 30 fighters and 6 fast patrol ships. All of the Kzinti defenders were destroyed while the Klingons lost 1 battletug, 6 fast patrol ships and 24 fighters destroyed, and 2 light war cruisers, 3 gunboats and 1 battletug crippled.

Weeks 6, 7 and 8 saw no action as all empires seemed to take a step back and catch their breath. The Gorns and Romulans especially took advantage of the respite to reorganize and resupply their scattered forces and to prepare themselves for the knockout punch against the Federation. The Federation player desperately began to push several starship construction projects and worked out a deal for several cloaking devices with the Romulans (about the only empire they were not

at war with aside from the Hydrans and Tholians).

ENTERTAINMENT PLUS MORE, INC.

Adventurers Guild

[from the diary of Tolstoy]

The tournament approaches! This should be a great test for the magic vs. brawn debate that is going so strongly. Once commonly viewed as weak and ineffectual, the use of combat magic such as the Daze or Vertigo spells is now considered by some to be very powerful. Rightly so in my opinion. I always thought there should be a better way to gain the advantage than being bigger or stronger. [Editor's note: Tolstoy is rather short, and more a scholar than a fighter.]

The talk of other mages researching spells and magical items is very exciting. If I can convince Graydawn to allow my research on the Slow spell to continue I could probably have it perfected by the next tournament. Think I'll go work on him right now.

[If you think you'd like to join the fun in the Adventurers Guild, see the Gameline section]

FRACTAL DIMENSIONS

A Duel of A Different Color

Awards: Catadu University pays tribute to it's instructors who have established a complete team of students that have achieved the level of Tint. Recent instructors who received this prestigious certificate are of the Freemages and the Nightwings. The Council of Colours congratulates those who received an award.

From the Morgue: Only one student has been killed in the underground dueling chambers during the last period, 4/16 - 6/18. The Colours of Catadu extend their condolences to the instructor and teammates of the Wimps of Death, who lost their comrade during the examinations. The University will always remember the one who gave his life. May 7: Kinkboy - Wimps of Death (35) by Sierra - Crystal Shards (42)

Campus Rumors: After a few too many ales, Cambridge of the Freemages was loudly lamenting, "I can't believe it. I lost a duel to

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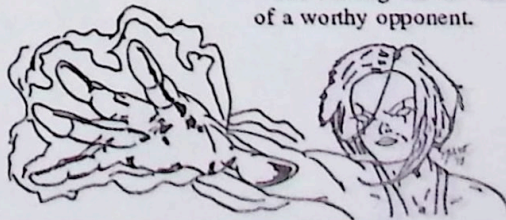
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one of the Wimps of Death. I mean, nobody actually loses to the Wimps of Death!" Her teammate Karina tried to console the big abooda saying "Well, at least it wasn't Kickaxe." "KICKAXE!" Cambridge exploded. "C'mon, nobody loses to Kickaxe!"...Pigment Monroe says, "Alright, everybody likes to have some fun, but enoughs enough. I know frats are supposed to have initiation pranks, but if whoever's responsible doesn't return my stun disks, PRONTO, things are gonna get unpleasant. Sheesh! I wake up for this?"...The 'medication' interfering with I'roc's magic is in fact believed to be a highly addictive illegal narcotic. Pigment Adanac has been requested to appear before the university president, and disciplinary action is pending...A member of the Rising Sun became a full moon, when Bloodshot allegedly showed off his best side to Karina of the Freemages. In a drunken stupor, he nearly fell from the balcony level of Dunbar's. Fortunately, Pigment Parker was on hand to catch him...The Sound and Fury's member, Black Martin, blew the curve in the Botany 101 final when he presented the professor with a biomagical mutated version of a black rose. After giving Martin an 'A', Professor Diggs was admitted to the infirmary with a case of unknown plant poisoning...Ivan the Red, from the Karamotzov Brotherhood, was seen partaking of a favorite zaxkian drink with Flavius of the Grey Sword Circle. Looking at Ivan's past dueling record, dueling strategy was definitely being discussed...Miranda of Zamfir's Blues gave an impressive flute performance at Dunbar's Coffee House recently. Conjure of the Eternal Colours was heard to say, "Jahoseaphat! That druid can really rock."

Student Spotlight on...Lilith of the Nightwings

One of the rising stars at Catadu University is Lilith of the Nightwings. Her instructor has been quite pleased with his prize pupil, even though her most recent matches have been less than exemplary. In point of fact, her duel with Cambridge of the Freemages left her in critical condition. Her husband, retired Pigment Questor, rushed to her side to see to her recovery.

"I am pleased to announce, that Lilith will again return to the Dueling Chambers," stated her instructor. "She has had sufficient rest and healing elixir. I expect that she will be a much more formidable foe than before!"

Her husband was less enthusiastic. "I cannot stop her from pursuing her studies, but sometimes I wish she would retire. I fear her bloodlust will be the death of her yet."

When pressed to comment on rumors circulating on campus regarding his spouse's alleged blood rituals, Questor had this to say, "Utter nonsense! My wife's days as a vampire are long past. She is in total remission, thanks to the fine campus medical staff."

Lilith herself responded to the charges with a shrug and her usual enigmatic reply. "I have never needed blood for survival, although I DO savor the taste."

When asked about her recent taunts on top-ranked Pierre of the Winter Flowers, she was most empathic. "They are merely that...taunts! He is a worthy opponent, and I look forward to finally being his equal and to be matched with him."

We are looking forward to that day as well.

In parting, she had only this to say. "Perhaps, my instructor is correct. I have been much too soft on my opponents. If they desire a match with me, they will have to put their lives on the line. My compassion nearly cost me my life. There is no room for compassion in the duel."

Looks like its going to get rough.

Catadu University Honor Roll


The Black and White Colors bid congratulations to the newest teams of CU's Honor Society. These teams are currently ranked the top five best at the university.

Team Name	Statistics
1 Winter Flowers(3)	58[1]-45-42
2 Rising Sun(25)	7[3]-6-6
3 Grey Sword Circle(37)	32[6]-9-8
4 Crystal Shards(42)	29[6]-10-8
5 Freemages(30)	26[1]-17-18
6 Sparklers(15)	14[0]-17-14
7 Wimps of Death(35)	20[1]-25-12
8 Hand Gestures(39)	18[0]-7-6
9 Kaleidoscopik Ventures(23)	13[0]-10-7
10 Nightwings(7)	19[0]-44-12
Deadly Spectrum(9)	15[0]-30-15

Note: All teams do not have five students. Therefore, the team statistics might be misleading. Actual standings are done by averaging the team members' ratings.

The Council of Colours bids congratulations to the newest members of CU's Honor Society. These students are currently ranked the top fifteen best at the university.

Student Name	Team Name	Statistics
1 Bollo	Winter Flowers(3)	18[0]-7-6
2 Pierre	Winter Flowers(3)	15[1]-7-5
3 Bloodshot	Rising Sun(25)	10[3]-2-1
4 Cerise	Crystal Shards(42)	13[0]-2-10
5 Remus	Grey Sword Circle(37)	6[3]-2-2
6 Gilles	Winter Flowers(3)	11[0]-11-9
7 Wisp	Grey Sword Circle(37)	8[1]-1-0
8 Geyser	Grey Sword Circle(37)	6[2]-2-2
9 Chitter	Wimps of Death(35)	8[0]-4-4
10 Amber	Crystal Shards(42)	4[3]-1-1
11 I'roc	Crystal Shards(42)	7[2]-4-3
12 Youngling	SwirlFreemages(30)	4[1]-3-5



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13 Maurs Winter Flowers(3) 8[0]-11-9
 14 Arpad Winter Flowers(3) 6[0]-9-13
 15 FlaviusGrey Sword Circle(37) 7[0]-3-3

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Middle-earth PBM

Game #31 - The Dark Servants: #20, #11 and #18. In a struggle which came down to the last battle of heroes, Sauron's minions cursed Arthedain's champion. Vainamöinen, as he stood poised to cast the One Ring into Mt. Doom, thus denying the Free People's victory. Sauron looked upon his servants with satisfaction, knowing they preserved his dynasty with their final actions. Final standings are as follows: #20 Dark Lieutenants - 2350, #11 Witch-king - 1983 and #18 Fire King - 1925.

Game #65 - The Dark Servants: #16, #22 & #21. Sauron's iron fist has seized Middle-earth in an unrelenting death grip, led by his faithful lieutenants in the field. Their opponents now fill their slave pits and heads of the Free leaders adorn their walls. Final standings are as follows: #16 Ice King - 2000, #22 Haradwaith - 1983 and #21 Corsairs - 1833.

Game #71 - The Free Peoples: #21, #10 & #23. The Light of Illuin and Ormal is once again kindled as the Free have banished Sauron and his Dark legions from the face of Middle-earth. The song of Eru now flows without opposition and life can now go on without fear of the Lidless Eye. Final standings are as follows: #21 Corsairs - 2050, #10 Noldo Elves - 2000 and #23 Dunlendings - 1683.

Game #73 - The Dark Servants: #15, #14 & #22. The Banner of the Lidless Eye flies over all of Middle-earth, with Sauron's strongest enforcing his will on those who dared oppose him. The Free have been crushed and the loyal sit at His side. Final standings are as follows: #15 Blind Sorcerer - 2300, #14 Cloud Lord - 2200 and #22 Haradwaith - 2000.

Game #87 - The Dark Servants: #20, #12 & #11. The sound of hob-nailed boots crushing Free bones beneath their heels echoes through Middle-earth as the Dark troops fan out to claim the land which now belongs to their strong-armed masters. Sauron's glorious reign has begun! Final standings are as follows: #20 Dark Lieutenants - 2400, #12 Dragon Lord - 1900 and #11 Witch-king - 1859.

GAMER'S DEN

VGA Planets

The Evil Empire's days appear to be numbered in the first VGA Planets playtest game. As one of the last two remaining empires alive in the game, they too are falling prey to Wolf Skywalker, long-toothed older brother to Luke. Bob Stear of Livermore, CA, is building up for a killing blow to the Empire's primary starbase and battle-moon.

Oddly, sources close to the Emperor claim that he is unconcerned. "It is all happening exactly as I planned."

Phoenix

There are over 20 games of Phoenix now running, and two single player games are complete. Congrats to Andrew Barton of Sutton in the UK, for finishing a game in 21 turns with the Pini and to Ashley "Four Clips and a Grenade" Taft of Columbus, OH, for averaging over 3 turns per day (including a 3 day vacation)!

Over 20 playtesters are now using the Phoenix Ambassador, an MS-DOS interface written by Dan Moen. Initial feedback has been supportive. One player and a graphic designer by profession, Bart Van Bael, liked it so much he offered to help provide additional artwork, thanks Bart! Two other players are madly writing tools for Unix machines. Stephen Mann has written a combat simulator and Jim Griffith is writing a full-blown browser with lots of bells and whistles - a galaxy map, on-line help, data file dumping, macros, range calculations, etc., etc....He's been doing this during his lunch breaks and weekends, thanks Jim!

HIGH POINT GAMES

World War IV

Game #1007: The Americas are, shall we say, continents in crisis. Or should that be CRISIS? A powerful alliance of superpowers from Europe and Africa is putting the squeeze on the last vestiges of disorganized resistance. The United States has been forcibly relocated to South America, and even there its tenure is likely to be brief. Alaska holds out in the Arctic, but its remote location can only prolong its defense. Argentina, being covertly supported by some members of the leading alliances while being overtly attacked by others, remains a pawn in the new world order. Then again, by the time you read this, the crisis may be over--no need to spell out how.

Game #1008: Two campaigns now underway are likely to determine the long term character of this game. In Africa, a consortium of Argentina, Brazil and Venezuela seeks to establish and maintain a foothold on the continent, propping up their war-weary allies Nigeria and Algeria. Against them is arrayed the united might of eastern Africa, with support from Europe beginning to trickle south. Half the world away, Alaska has occupied the Japanese islands, though Japan still has extensive holdings on the mainland. Japan has powerful allies in Indochina and Indonesia--but how concerned are they with his fate?

Game #1011: Just recently underway (turn 3), this game sports a mix of veterans and quite a few newcomers too "brave" to try an introductory game. So far the only country to crumble has been Texas, whose rich oil fields

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must've looked just a little too alluring and not quite well enough defended...Look for Mexico and Ecotopia to become major suppliers of West Texan Crude.

Game #1013: This is the first "introductory" game started by High Point Games. Limited to new players (and players who never survived the opening of a regular game), this game started with just 25 players to give everyone more room for expansion. It will be interesting to see how a game filled with "fresh blood" progresses.

KEITH LANGLEY

Ancient Empires

#1: With the disappearance of Midodo (again), the conflict is down to four empires: Ardic, Duba, Egham and Ensu. Ensu and Ardic are at war, Ensu and Egham are allies and Duba is nominally allied to both Ensu and Ardic, though relations with Ensu are breaking down.

Ensu is leading with nine nations controlled and a strong grip on Ardic's capital and surrounding area. Ensu's invasion is supported by a fleet of over 80 galleys, including six heavy triremes. Ardic has finally responded to Ensu's invasion with guerrilla actions and a military buildup; due to a metal shortage its defense is based largely on hordes of barbarian calvary. Ardic's acquisition of Gython gives it a third nation as an economic base (or a place to hide), but if Duba does not come to its aid shortly Ardic is lost.

Duba controls four nations and has almost captured two others; its actions in the Ardic-Ensu conflict have been limited to diplomatic pressure and intelligence-gathering. Duba recently gave up all possessions on Egham's continent - in exchange for what?

Egham is in second place with seven nations controlled and influence in three others. Strongly allied to Ensu, it remains to be seen whether Egham will maintain that alliance all the way to a second place finish.

When Duba and Ensu fight, can Egham win by quietly expanding in neutral areas and staying out of the fight? Will they yield to that temptation? And will Ensu and Duba let them get away with it? One way or another this game should be over before it enters its third year.

#2: Some nations have returned to tribal anarchy, while new empires have sprung up elsewhere. Most nations are discovering that diplomatic action and dirty tricks are easier and cheaper ways to capture villages than fighting. Ardic is using these techniques in Monola. Schloss's government dissolved, just when it had almost become the first empire to capture a second nation. Largo's influence in Kampe is expanding despite its failure to capture the village of Gibao in its first military action. Rhodes' invasion of Bodan also failed despite the discovery of a hidden deepwater cove to unload its galleys. Sumatray has gained control of most of Egham and part of Horsel through a judicious mix of threat, promise and warfare. Midodo now controls most of Sindor through similar actions. Rodetan's army has captured half of Hioken and part of Womas; Cana has also gained a village in Womas.

In the first inter-empire conflict, a small force from Rodetan crossed into Cana and briefly held the village of Starve. 1300 Canan barbarian cavalry quickly drove them back out.

This game has room for more players, and a new game is starting.

One True Faith

#1: More confusion in the pantheon is the order of the day, as Kilroy was overthrown in a celestial coup d'etat and replaced by Tyche, Goddess of Luck. Strahd has ceased to exist on the Divine plane, as expected. For those who have had trouble keeping track of the comings and goings, here is the Divine Roster:

DEITY	WORSHIPPERS	PROVINCES
EVIL-Cosmic Balance 1.05		
Xanthia, Goddess of Laughter	5,300	20

Escher, God of Mathematics	3,500	18
Glasya, Goddess of Death	2,200	10
GOOD-Cosmic Balance of 0.98		
Zenith, Goddess of Pleasure	4,700	22
Tyria, God of Justice	3,300	10
Ferretlord, God of Animals	2,300	13
NEUTRAL-Cosmic Balance 0.97		
Jarrellian, God of Commerce	3,600	11
Raurok, God of Anarchy	3,300	14
Tyche, Goddess of Luck	3,300	11

Military actions of note include Ferretlord's loss of Lithuania to Escher, removing the last Ferretic army in Northern Europe and giving Escher ten connected provinces approximating the Prussian empire of Frederick the Great. Escher also tried to invade Glasyan holdings in Scotland but his fleet was destroyed in a dramatic battle that featured a water-walking Giant and Mammoth. Escher, Zenith and Ferretlord continue to maneuver for dominance in France, with little actual combat. Xanthia sank a Glasyan fleet trying to sneak out of the Sinai in violation of a treaty.

In the financial news, the Cretan Stock Exchange opened, with Jarrellian and Xanthia offering goods for exchange there. A land swap between Raurok and Zenith gave Zenith the island of Aland near Finland, in exchange for Tripoli and Rhodes. The first true Wasteland was created, as a Deity pulled all of its followers out of a province, leaving it barren. The location, and Deity responsible, are not yet generally known. Several theological debates are scheduled, including Serbia (Escher vs. Ferretlord) and Florence (Escher vs. Glasya). The miraculous front has been relatively quiet; no epidemics, earthquakes, or other acts of Gods have been reported recently.

#2: Is starting now!

MARGUERITE DIAS

Kavernes

Another one? Yes, another one. Poor,

KRAHLIZEK

The god Krah has placed you on a land of his own making with several others. He has provided the perfect conditions to prove your empire-building abilities: a few provinces, some gold, troops and navies, and plenty of filthy-rich peasants. Expand your empire by taxing your peasants and attacking other players. But take care -- overtaxed rabble take no truck from greedy tyrants. If you balance your military and social demands, you may purchase advanced technologies which can give you the upper hand you need to crush your enemies... and claim Krah as your own! KRAHLIZEK is a closed-ended strategic wargame in which you get: Customized starting positions; customized order sheets that employ simple English; an ever-expanding library of full-color game maps; clear, concise, laser-quality turn reports; 100% computer moderation.

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Setup Includes rules, setup, and three turns.

Aggressive Addiction Games, Inc.

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poor, poor Rick The Slick. Who's Rick The Slick, you ask? He was--and, we repeat, he was, an intrepid adventurer run by B.E. Wright of Gainesville, Florida. Rick The Slick evidently wasn't as slick as he thought. One false move and all his efforts to investigate the mystery known as the Kavernes was over. He probably never realized how dangerous the abandoned farmhouse was. But it's too late now (sob)!

Others have been more fortunate...more or less. And it all came about because these individuals had entered the shop of a curio-dealer through an aimless impulse, with no object in mind, other than the idle distraction of eyeing and fingering a miscellany of far-gathered things. And there, amidst the litter of oddments from many lands and eras, they heard mention of the Kavernes. The proprietor, a dwarfish fellow with an air of dusty antiquity, had given the impression of

being lost to commercial considerations...but he did know about a subterranean network, a place of riches beyond compare.

And that's what brought them to the farmhouse, John Mouldy's Place. It was said to be the entrance, but the entrance to what?

Still, the twisted journey into the underground realm of the Kavernes has only begun for these innocents. They have begun to delve into an underground kingdom that defies logical explanation. Who knows what will happen next?

Not Rick The Slick, the poor fellow (sob).

New Dawn

Solemn Valley is a point of light, a claustrophobic gulch, a trill of birdsong, a thunderclap, a pool of rainwater, a social vacuum and a wonder of the realm of New Dawn. It is pines, sullen gray mornings and emerald meadows. But to the explorer, it is

about rocks--titanic rocks.

The sides of Solemn Valley, though steep, are uneven and craggy. Sometimes they rear nearly a mile above the valley floor. Trees and shrub cling to some parts; others are sectioned and terraced. At intervals, standing out boldly from this backdrop, are beetling spires, soaring faces of polished rock, each singular in form and a monument unto itself: Fearsome Jut, a great tintured fist some 4000 feet high; Mourner, rising some 3000 feet off the scree like a mighty gray tombstone; Death's Face, a cleft stone monument, veiled in ancient shade; and The Last Sentinel, soaring straight up off the talus, its great white slabs, orange towers, and sheer magnitude seeming terrible, yet none of it so much as the terrible emptiness that sets in the gut of the New Dawn adventurer the first time he or she sees it.

On any day, people can be found in the meadows, half a mile away, gazing up at the

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might rocks. Suddenly, someone will yell, "There it is!" The person who spotted the dot will point and describe the colors shown or a certain minaret, and the people will all squint up, and finally one will exclaim, "A god!"

No one knows exactly what lives on or within those mighty monuments of Solemn Valley. Tiny mariners on a sea of rock, these mysterious figures, seemingly frozen, are pasted to the side of a granite wave some six miles long and thousands of feet high. In early morning, when rags of fog drape the meadow, and the air is still and sharp as knives, you can hear the tap, tap, tap of a sound that drums up the dawn, the faint metronome of an ominous dance taking place far above the vision of normal beings.

This is one of the mysteries of New Dawn. And there are other tales to be told, but further away, in the city of Casbah...Newcomers have been seen in the Bent Elbow Tavern, looking for a fight or another tale, their skin supposedly so pale that others swore they had grown up in a cave.

Brundle mercenaries--tough as nails and ready for anything so long as there was risk involved--had been heard hawking their skills in the marketplaces.

Lord Tumeric supposedly had recruited a group of young stalwarts--each with flags of a rising moon on their possessions, asking little more from life than a chance to risk it--for another descent into the Great Crack.

A group of masons had been found dead in a sewer, notes proclaiming "Fearless As God" tacked to their chests.

The Theatre of the Dead had arrived, their naked passion vouchsafed by their waving hands and much repeated entreaties to savor the molting past.

A Gorgon had been seeking out no-counts and castoffs as test subjects for a mysterious elixir.

Lady Hov, a member of the Casbah elite, had announced the date for her annual Dance Of The Illustrious celebration.

A Scotch, old and tired, speaking in reedy gasps, staggered into the city and told all who would listen about a jewel that would transform the flesh into a gleaming metal that was impervious to all blows.

Cyberfringe

You wouldn't exactly say he's panicking, but Trevor S. Barnes is concerned about the future. Sure, his net worth is approaching \$3 trillion. Sure, Lifedepot is at the height of its powers and will close out the fiscal year with revenues of \$1.6 trillion, aftertax margins of 30%, and \$1.1 trillion in cash. And at around \$1109, Lifedepot stock is at an all-time high. But Barnes has spent a lot of time peering into the future lately.

What does Trevor S. Barnes see? He sees a world of powerful, high-speed networks--both within megacorporations and across the Earth Cybertronic Network. And he sees the cyberfringe.

It won't do for Barnes just to be the king of human organ supplies. Eventually the networks will shift the medical industry's center of gravity away from organ transplants. Over time, the Net--both wired and wireless--will take the medical industry to a new level of cloning: troncloning.

Lifedepot wants the troncloning business.

And the cyberfringe worries Barnes because, according to rumor, they may know the process for troncloning, and the president of Lifedepot wants a monopoly on that technology before the cyberfringe can develop it... and possibly distribute it free of charge to all. The way Barnes sees it, what profit would there be in troncloning if everyone had it?

Trevor S. Barnes is concerned.

Barnes has taken a look at the past and seen that in general, the megacorporations that were great powers in one era of technology could not extend their dominance into the next. Fixated on the technology that made them great, companies such as TTD or Silicon Supplies Systems underestimated the potential of newer

developments. And Barnes is determined to make sure that that doesn't happen to Lifedepot. "Companies in this business have often lost their way," says Barnes. "Lifedepot will not fall short for not having an expansive view of how technology can be used."

Welcome to 2054, the world of Trevor S. Barnes and his dreams of a soon-to-be-extinct cyberfringe.

ROLLING THUNDER GAMES, INC.

Victory! The Battle For Europe

The sixth game of *Victory! The Battle For Europe* has ended. Game #3 was played to conclusion (73 turns) and four nations survived the meatgrinder to compete for various honors.

The official winner of Game #3 was a three nation total alliance: Bill Vognsen, Bulgaria; Brian Goehrig, Czechoslovakia and Allan C Losh, Yugoslavia.

The score for each nation was 638 victory points (out of a maximum of 735). Second place in game #3 went to Claude Richard's United States with 466 points.

"Best Nation" honors (based on individual scores) went to Bill Vognsen's Bulgaria, Brian Goehrig's Czechoslovakia, Allan C Losh's Yugoslavia and Claude Richard's United States (all being the first to finish a game).

The current "Best Nation" list is as follows: Best Austria, Phillip Dedmon with 407 points; Best Baltic States, Richard H. Reece with 506 points; Best Bulgaria, Bill Vognsen with 644 points; Best Central Russia, David Hunt with 670 points; Best Czechoslovakia, Brian Goehrig with 627 points; Best Finland, Jack Osborne with 669 points; Best Greece, Steve Ezzo with 665 points; Best Hungary, James Hines with 518 points; Best Iraq, Chris Wayne with 614 points; Best Ireland, James Zielinski with 421 points; Best Norway, Kent M. Miller with 631 points; Best Persia, James Babson with 570 points; Best Poland, Charles Clark with 654 points; Best Rumania, Joe Lardear with 665

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points; Best Sweden, Richard Cavins with 603 points; Best Tunisia, Richard H. Reece with 533 points; Best United States, Claude Richard with 480 points and Best Yugoslavia, Allan C Losh with 627 points.

Congratulations to all!

Game #'s 4, 6-10, and 13-36 of *Victory! The Battle for Europe* are now running, with game #'s 37+ taking signups at this time.

SHADOW ISLAND GAMES

Olympia PBEM

The second Olympia playtest ended on turn 112. Harold C. Payson was the top player in terms of wealth, skills and spells known, and characters controlled. Other top players were Chuk Craig, Jay Heyman, David Kerven, Allan Flanagan, Christopher Yearsley, Dan Corrin, Ben Swain, Bill Lee, Tim Whalen and Mike Cote.

I would like to personally thank all of the playtesters for doing an excellent job. I was constantly impressed with the effort the players put into uncovering bugs and design problems. Many of their suggestions were incorporated into the game.

Olympia's commercial launch has gone very well, with 94 players going into the second turn. A great deal of diplomatic activity is taking place, with alliances large and small trying to carve their empires out of the new

world. Reading *The Olympia Times* is a good way to keep tabs on what the various alliances are up to. (Back issues are available via email—just ask.)

All new players start in the Imperial City on the continent of Provinia. There are a number of interesting features on this continent, including the Cloudlands, a small region which floats high above the Imperial City and Mt. Olympus; Uldim pass, a land route which becomes impassable in the winter due to heavy snowfall; and Summerbridge, a swampy region passable only during the dry summer months.

Several alliances have made building a ship and sailing for one of the nearby continents their immediate goal. Rumors claim others are planning to stake a claim in Provinia, perhaps by building a castle on Mt. Olympus itself. Several unallied players are reported to be studying Gatecraft in an attempt to find a magical portal to another continent.

SINBAD'S GAMES

Coupdetat

Game #5, Turn #46 saw only ten attacks, including two nukes. BOGOTA took one city from HELENA and failed in an attack on VALANCE. TAKAISHI, a rapidly expanding power, captured three cities in the northeast from RANNOCH and one in the

southwest from FENWICH. NEWBURY captured an island from FENWICH, failed to take another city, and delivered a nuclear bomb on a sea sector that was rumored to contain a fleet from VALANCE. OLMONK captured a city from ELKMONT and delivered a nuclear bomb on a large city of NEWBURY. TAKAISHI gifted a captured capital in the southwest to his ally ELIZONDO.

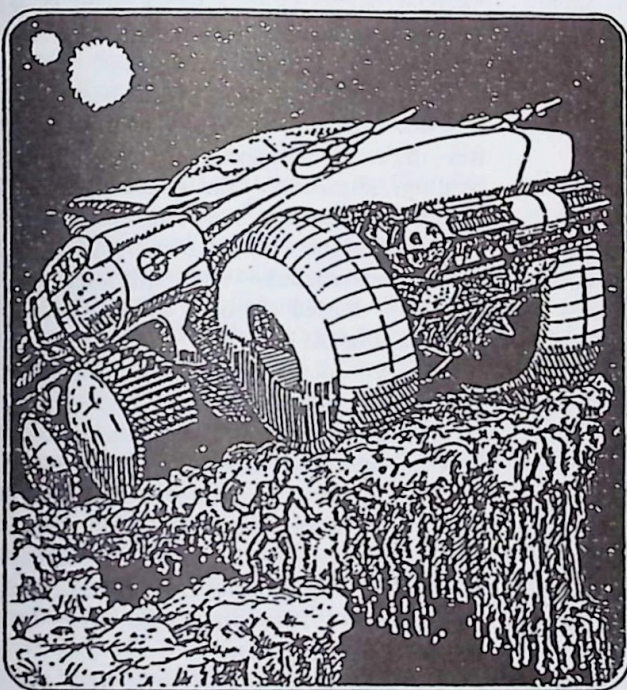
Turn 47 also saw only ten attacks. The quantity is dropping, but the ferocity is growing. TAKAISHI captured the capital of NICOBAR with a paratroop assault, then took two more cities from him. TAKAISHI took another city from the remains of PIEDMONT. BOGOTA recaptured one city from VALANCE and took another from HELENA. KASSEL failed to take a city from FENWICH. KEMPTON captured a city from RANNOCH. ELIZONDO captured the capital of OLMONK, which opens a whole new front. And NEWBURY delivered a nuclear bomb to a small city of OLMONK. It looks like the economic powerhouses of ELIZONDO and TAKAISHI are planning to overwhelm the nuclear-armed alliance of OLMONK and NICOBAR with human wave attacks aimed at the largest cities.

GALACTIC PRISONERS

2440 AD - When expanding into the unknown regions of space, humans encountered a vastly superior civilization, the Nibor. Because of the highly aggressive nature of humans, peace with the Nibor was not possible. The Nibor were forced to destroy all humans except for a very few. These remaining humans have been placed on a portion of a large planet. You are one of those select, remaining humans. You will be studied by your Nibor observers.

Because of your unique personality, intelligence and leadership, the Nibor have selected you as the captain of an All Terrain Vehicle (ATV). You have been given a crew of 100 humans who were your fellow prisoners. It is your responsibility, as the captain, to provide your crew with survival.

Galactic Prisoners is a unique, realistic and exciting, computer-moderated, open-ended, futuristic game. There are numerous avenues of play. Some of you will build walled forts to defend yourselves. Some will build a vast labyrinth of tunnels below the planetary surface. Some will establish colonies to increase production and income. Some will form corporations in the player-controlled stock market. Some will become warriors and take what they want from others by force. Some will do combinations of all of these. Alliances will be formed. Treaties will be made and broken. There will be much to explore and discover. Many different aliens will share this prison with you. Those of you who survive and prosper will do so because of your intelligence and understanding. Luck plays only a small part.



At first glance, *Galactic Prisoners* appears to be an uncomplicated game. It isn't. It is a game of discovery. As you learn, you will see that *Galactic Prisoners* is a large, complex game. As you learn, you will progress to more and more complex versions of the game.

You are permitted to move as fast as once a week or as slowly as you like. You determine your turn lengths. All turns are processed on the day they are received as long as seven days have elapsed.

To begin, send your check for \$18.00 to Grandel, Inc. to receive the rulebook, setup and 4 turns. Subsequent turns will be \$3.00 each. Discounts can lower the cost to \$2.64 per turn. Combat results are sent to attacked players free of charge. We accept phoned-in turns at no additional charge. Except for two rarely used techniques, there are no additional game charges. We do charge a small additional fee of \$.25 for a FAXed turn. Any player who recruits a new player will be given two free turns.

Grandel, Inc., P.O. Box 4386, Wilmington, DE 19807-0386

SLAVOK'S SOJOURN

A DAY IN THE ADVENTURER'S GUILD

By Shawn Patrick

Slavok the Silent was three days out from the guild hall in the town of Barstow when he found the small gate with a large green X painted on it. It was almost a relief to have reached the ruined dwarven city of Marikhold, considering the last few days of travel. On the first day out he'd found the remains of a nobleman in an avalanche, stripped of all valuables. He'd been unable to sleep that night in the small cave, each noise becoming a foe lying in wait. The next day had almost lulled Slavok into letting down his guard - good weather, great camp site and fresh fish speared on his gauntlet spikes. The next morning he spotted a wyvern overhead, the incident keeping his senses keen all day.

It had been just a few hours since the hulking lizardman had performed his final gear check under a ledge that passed for shelter. His scaly hand snaked out to touch the amulet hanging about his neck. It was insulting, having to rely on the Training Amulet of the

green adventurers. But last week he'd bitten off more than he could chew. In the Blood Cairn with his compatriots from the Menagerie of Misfits Adventuring Group he'd entered a hopeless battle without thought of retreat, and his Medallion of Returning had been activated. Once his lifeless body had reached the neutral priests of the temple, they had successfully performed a resurrection. He beat the odds again. But now he had to replenish his resurrection fund.

The familiar weight of the strong box strapped across the plane of his back was a comfort to him. It contained his Protection Gem, which would negate all spells cast at him until the fateful day it shattered. It also contained the Potions of Healing he would rely on if wounded. It was the last opportunity he'd have to use the potions before devoting himself to the undying god Mordtch, who was known to prevent their use. The plate mail and great helm he wore were designed with his muscular reptilian frame in mind, and in them he looked like the heavily scaled dragon-men of childhood stories. He did not rely simply on armor for defense, though.

The terrifying mute completed the last of the ritual Protection spell he'd been preparing for the last few days, and readying his other spell he entered Marikhold.

At the familiar enclosed beach before the river entrance to the underground city, Slavok could no longer block out the stories of the horrific Green Death - the plague that had killed or driven off the population of this striving community. Spying the heavily used red door he sought, Slavok advanced. Then stepping out of the shadows came his first adversary.

The young human before him was a disappointment. On this solo trip Slavok had sought a challenge equal to his own abilities. This wasn't even close. Suddenly aware that he'd skipped breakfast, Slavok's massive gut began to rumble at the Thug's approach. Perhaps there was an up side to the encounter.

Gesturing rapidly with his long-spiked gauntlets, Slavok invoked the Power spell. Unlike the earlier ritual, this was Combat Magic. It's energy came from Slavok's own body, and he bore the cost immediately as sweat began to trickle down his face. As the magic took hold, Slavok was aware of the greater strength in his limbs and the aura of defense surrounding his body.

The two closed ground slowly, until Slavok was close enough to make the first move. His heavy reptilian tail whipped out at

the Thug's legs, but was unexpectedly jumped over. Losing control of his momentum, Slavok spun around and exposed his back to the Thug's dagger. As the eager human prepared a thrust Slavok continued the spin and collided heavily with the young man's legs. The scents of blood and sweat mingled in Slavok's nostrils. Taking advantage of the Thug's shock, Slavok's left fist launched forward to collide wetly with the human's chest. The last thing the Thug heard was the sound of his ribs cracking.

A short while later, a few more gold crowns in his strong box and a gory meal in his gullet, Slavok made his way through the red door into a cobweb strewn hall beyond. He came to a door slightly ajar, and continued through into a narrow, damp corridor about six feet wide. At its end were three doors - a big one that actually seemed to glow, a black door that seemed well used and a red door that was similarly well travelled. Having decided that his prospects for a fight were better with the black door, Slavok trudged forward. At the moment, Slavok heard a series of clicks and whirs. He turned just in time to catch the huge, heavily weighted blade in his side.

Gasping at the wound which began a red flow down his armor, Slavok detached himself from the clever trap and unpacked a Potion of Healing. Immediately the wound closed, and a short while later it was completely healed. Rising to continue, Slavok discovered that the black door was stuck. With rising anger at the delays, he hurled his body at the door and smashed it open.

Slavok erupted into a large room decorated with six large pillars. Glancing quickly about, Slavok realized he'd entered a vault inhabited by a foe well-known to him. Felldwarves. After a scramble for weapons, the five moved warily towards him. From their dress, Slavok determined them to be Squires. He wondered where their Knight masters might be, but only for a moment. Throwing up his Power spell he slowly closed ground.

"I'll cleave your gut with this axe!" screamed one of the felldwarves.

The first move was again Slavok's to make, and his tail whipped out towards the lead Squire - who easily jumped it. Taking advantage of Slavok's slow recovery from the miss, a felldwarf attacked with his hand axe, which bounced off Slavok's plate mail. The felldwarves seemed impressed - the silently hulking invader did not even react to the axe. Few warriors are so brave or foolhardy as to ignore the attacks of their foes. A thought

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must surely have entered their minds - was this warrior a Berserker?

The felldwarves surrounded him like a dog pack, always looking for a moment of weakness. Stepping quickly forward Slavok ignored a series of ringing hits off his side and back to swing at the nearest opponent. The felldwarf leaped away. The felldwarves were so unprepared for these tactics they began missing Slavok completely, not expecting him to move into their blows. Trying to attack his first assailant, Slavok nearly tripped over the Squire right at his feet. Not caring which of his foes died first he struck down at the nearer instead, as axe blade rained down upon him faster than he could count. Not quick enough to avoid Slavok's spiked gauntlet, the Squire was punished through the leather armor upon his left arm. He growled in pain while dodging the follow-up attack.

As blood flowed freely from his wounds, the injured Squire joined the others in trying to cut down the massive oak in their midst. Not even bothering to react, the lizardman jabbed at the injured felldwarf and a spike pierced his leather helm square in the forehead. The Squire struggled to stay up, then collapsed before going unconscious. The sight of blood seemed to invigorate the baneful warrior.

For the next several minutes Slavok raged about the room, chasing down the felldwarves who tried in vain to best his natural, man-made and magical defenses. Slavok was dimly aware of one Squire slipping out of the room when the others were busy with the lizardman. Finally finding himself in need of strategy, Slavok positioned himself so that the fallen felldwarf hindered the approach of the three remaining. While they tried moving the body of their comrade aside, Slavok attacked one of them several times unsuccessfully before the felldwarf made the mistake of attempting a parry. Smashing through the axe, the spiked gauntlet continued on through the armor of the felldwarf's arm and inflicted a flesh wound - as well as sending him tumbling to the floor.

Slavok tried to catch the felldwarf on the ground, but the slippery little Squire dived aside and regained his feet. The felldwarf's two companions each took a leg and tried in vain to hack through the protection there. Slavok's muscles slowly began the anguished protest that comes from prolonged hand-to-hand fighting, and he realized that he must strive to end this fight soon.

Closing rapidly, Slavok poked with his spiked gauntlet and caught his short opponent on top of his leather helm. The spikes dug into the felldwarf's skull, then pulled roughly free as the Squire hit the floor hard - completely dazed. Choking on dust raised by his fall, the wounded felldwarf was unaware of Slavok's other gauntlet as it wreaked considerable damage upon him. The decimated warrior groaned loudly while trying to roll away before he passed out from pain.

Subconsciously, Slavok was aware the fighting had now become desperate, with both felldwarves and lizardman unable to maintain their faltering defenses. Adrenaline powered each blow, and each was potentially deadly.

This was what he lived for.

Turning to the felldwarf on the left, Slavok ignored the other Squire's futile hacking and swung clumsily at a fatigued combatant, who barely ducked out of the way. Slavok moved forward in pursuit, leaving the other felldwarf to nearly stumble in his attempt to follow. Blow after blow landed upon Slavok's back until finally he tired of it. Turning swiftly he drove a spiked gauntlet into the shoulder of the flailing felldwarf. His eyes attempted to fix on Slavok while trying to ignore the incredible pain, then Slavok watched him drop senselessly to the ground.

Turning back to his last remaining foe, Slavok lumbered forward with muscles turning to lead. His first vicious assault proved too powerful for the Squire to defend against. Slavok's spiked gauntlet punished the weapon arm of his fatigued opponent, and there was a satisfying groan of pain. Confident that a kill was on the way, Slavok casually drew back his spiked gauntlet - and got a hand axe in the ribs.

The blow was a lucky act of desperation on the part of the remaining felldwarf. At first the Squire felt a glimmer of hope as he read disbelief in the hulking mute's slitted eyes. But his confidence quickly fled as the look became a glare of insane hatred. Flecked with foam, the drool flooding from Slavok's open jaws spattered the dusty floor as his vision went red.

The Berserk Rage took him.

Some time later, the features of the room returned to Slavok the Silent. He counted three bodies and some remains that could have been one or two more. Poking about the room revealed a bag of gold crowns. Combined with the individual coin purses from the bodies it added up to quite a nice cache. From one of the bodies Slavok also recovered a silver nugget and a small token with some strange writing upon it - "Promotional Credit (75 cents)". After resting a bit, Slavok examined the exits from the room and settled on a blue door in the corner.

Through the door, Slavok once again entered the cobweb filled corridors. He carefully stepped over a shattered skull, large enough to be an ogre's. After some time spent wandering, he passed through a door he found hanging open and entered another pillared vault with a single exit at the far end. As he cautiously moved down the center row of pillars he detected a peculiar whistling sound. He recognized it just as one of the local Bandit Chiefs stepped out from behind the last pillar, twirling a sling.

"You waste my time, Slavok," declared the Bandit Chief.

So, this was one of the bandits that escaped

Slavok's Adventuring Group two weeks earlier! Well, letting him live had been a mistake. One that Slavok was happy to correct. Casting his Power spell at full strength, Slavok began a hurried approach to the Bandit Chief - trying to close in where the sling would be ineffective.

The Bandit Chief was fast, faster than Slavok remembered. The heavy-built human managed to get off five shots before Slavok closed the ground. Fortunately, he was a poor marksman. Only one of the bullets collided with the giant lizardman, and it careened off his leg without breaking his stride.

Just as Slavok reached the madly slinging Bandit Chief the human dropped the sling, then drew and sliced with a short sword. The blade hit hard and rang like a bell, but couldn't harm Slavok within his four layers of defense. Seeing this, the human switched tactics. With a quick push and swing of his leg Slavok was tripped up and fell to the ground. But before the Bandit Chief could make another move, Slavok jumped back to his feet. Two could play at dirty fighting...

The Bandit Chief was caught flat-footed by the whipping tail, and was battered and bruised. Emitting a howl of pain, he stopped in amazement at this injury. Apparently this sort of thing was rare for him. Slavok knew

continued on page 45

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AS OF 7/15/94

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GAME	COMPANY	RATING	RESPONSES
1 Adventurers Guild	Entertainment Plus More, Inc.	8.500	35
2 Star Fleet Warlords	Agents of Gaming	8.406	43
3 Victory!	Rolling Thunder Games	8.016	153
4 Star Quest	Deltax Gaming	7.825	20
5 World War IV	High Point Games	7.736	19
6 Centurion	Fantasy Workshop	7.708	12
7 Continuum	Zephyr Enterprises Inc	7.642	14
8 Gladiators of Death	Fantasy & Futuristic Simulations	7.558	17
9 A National Will	Simcoarum Systems	7.533	15
10 Middle-Earth PBM	Game Systems Inc	7.508	124
11 Galactic Prisoners	Grandel Inc	7.487	49
12 Sceptre	Sceptre Roleplaying	7.416	18
13 Modern World Conquest	Prime Time Simulations	7.388	18
14 CTF 2187	Advanced Gaming Enterprises	7.303	56
15 Starweb	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.271	66
16 Continental Rails	Graaf Simulations	7.267	28
17 Adventurer Kings	Ark Royal Games	7.261	57
18 Gameplan	Graaf Simulations	7.222	18
19 Sirius Command	Inner Dimension Games	7.153	13
20 World Wide Battle Plan	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.083	36
21 El Mythico	Graaf Simulations	7.068	29
22 World Conquest	Prime Time Simulations	7.055	54
23 Into Infinity	Battle-Magic Gaming	7.045	22
24 Rimworlds	Palace Simulations	6.964	14
25 Family Wars	Cyclops Gaming	6.958	12
26 Mobius I	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.913	23
27 Armageddon's Aftermath	Damien Games	6.909	11
28 Evermoor II	Bronze Star Gaming	6.875	31
29 Realms of Fantasy	Graaf Simulations	6.866	15
30 The Next Empire	Reality Simulations	6.851	27
31 Atlantrix	Battle-Magic Gaming	6.842	19
32 Swords of the Gods	Ares Gaming	6.800	10
33 Quest	Adventures By Mail	6.721	64
34 Quest of the Great Jewels	Flying Dutchman Games	6.695	23
35 Supernova II	Rolling Thunder Games	6.676	17
36 Darkness of Silverfall	Coconut Council, Inc	6.666	15
37 Lords of Destiny	Maelstrom Games	6.646	32
38 Feudal Lords II	Graaf Simulations	6.592	27
39 World War IV	JFH Games	6.533	15
40 Star Saga	Infinite Odysseys	6.531	16
41 1939 World Wide Battleplan	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.500	20
42 Spiral Arm	Graaf Simulations	6.482	29
43 Cosmic Crusaders	Genesis Games Design	6.380	25
44 Monster Island	Adventures By Mail	6.348	66
45 Crystal Island	Saul Betesh	6.333	18
46 Crack of Doom	Advanced Gaming Enterprises	6.265	20
47 Illuminati	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.242	33
44 Paper Mayhem			

48 Legends	Midnight Games	6.241	93
49 Alamaze	Pegasus Productions	6.196	51
50 Stand & Deliver	Stand & Deliver	6.155	38
51 Epic	Midnight Games	6.114	35
52 Battleplan	Flying Buffalo Inc	6.108	46
53 Land of Karrus	Paper Tigers	6.062	27
54 The Weapon	Fantastic Simulations	6.000	15
55 Out Time Days	Twin Engine Gaming	5.947	40
56 Nuclear Destruction	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.857	14
57 Feudal Lords	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.777	36
58 Fleet Manuevers	Fantastic Simulations	5.761	21
59 Hyborian War	Reality Simulations Inc	5.694	77
60 Death & Sorrow	Eckert Gaming Group	5.690	21
61 Duelmasters	Reality Simulations Inc	5.677	45
62 Heroic Fantasy	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.542	70
63 State of War	Game Systems Inc	5.447	19
64 Belter	Classified Information	5.400	15
65 Nuclear War	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.272	11
66 Galactic Conflict	Flying Buffalo Inc	5.235	17
67 Kingdom	Graaf Simulations	5.208	24
68 Takamo	Advent Games	5.066	15
69 The Clans of Trove	Yellowseed Games	5.000	11
70 Starlord	Flying Buffalo Inc	4.600	25
71 It's a Crime!	Adventures By Mail	4.163	49
72 Beyond/Stellar Empire	Adventures By Mail	3.541	24

SLAVOK'S SOJOURN *continued from page 43*

what that was like.

Switching back to what worked, the human again tripped the hulking lizardman, using his own weight against him. Again, Slavok displayed speed belying his size and rolled back up before the Bandit Chief could take advantage of the fall. Coming up, his right hand spiked gauntlet shot out towards the Bandit Chief's chest. The short sword that intercepted the blow couldn't stop it completely, but weakened it enough to glance off studded leather armor. Taking advantage of a perceived opening, the Bandit Chief hacked at the lizardman with his short sword. Ignoring the blow completely, Slavok pounded the Bandit Chief in the body before he could defend. The armor wasn't enough to protect him.

Surprised and angry the Bandit Chief swung twice more rapidly, and was himself stabbed twice more - once again in the chest and then in his sword arm. Realizing his mistake too late, the Bandit Chief failed to parry with an arm nearly paralyzed with pain. As the long spikes penetrated his lungs, the Bandit Chief cried out in pain - then wobbled a bit before sliding off the spikes and falling unconscious to the ground.

While resting up, Slavok went through the possessions of the fallen Bandit Chief. He was quite well-off, indeed. Over one hundred gold crowns, a skunk statue carved of marble and a jade crow figurine. Slavok mused over the many magical properties once attributed to such objects, knowing them to be romantic

stores with no basis in reality. When he was fully rested, Slavok continued through the far door.

Wandering through damp and fetid corridors, Slavok noticed some writing on the walls. The runes were unfamiliar to him, but he paused to memorize them for his Group Leader. The cunning elf maiden Vixen DuFey was able to find meaning in such scribbling that sometimes aided Menagerie of Misfits.

Afterward he continued through the corridors looking for signs of life, and hoped for more fights before he was due to leave for Barstow. So intent was he on the living that Slavok was oblivious to the magical ward on the floor. The moment his booted foot hit the runes an explosion sent him to the ground. With ears ringing, Slavok assessed the damage

to himself and decided that the burns warranted his second Potion of Healing. A short while later he was fully healed and passing through a nearby door.

The small, perfectly cubic room beyond held only one point of interest. Every member of the adventurer's guild to survive beyond a few outings had encountered the Night Cult - bane of all that lives in the light. This Cult Guard was typical for his kind - except in the fact that he was alone. A human of slightly under six feet in chain mail with a coif. Clenching his spiked gauntlet into a fist, the Cult Guard drew his broad sword.

"Your soul shall feed the Blackness!" shouted the Cult Guard.

And then the fight was on.

The Cult Guard was better armored, bigger

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and possibly more skilled than those denizens of Marikhold he'd faced thus far. Slavok felt the force of the blows through his plate mail, and four of them came down hard before Slavok swung with his spiked gauntlet. His first blow made it through the Cult Guard's parry, through the chain mail coif and into the human's head. He almost blacked out for a moment from the head wound, and when his vision cleared Slavok could see fear in his eyes.

The second blow came moments later, following a feeble effort by the wounded Cult Guard. This one hit the Cult Guard's body so forcefully that the human clutched at his ribs with the gauntleted hand to check for breaks. He was caught by surprise when Slavok's other fist came up to punish the other side of his body. The cult guard stumbled left, then fell to his knees. Through some miracle he managed to parry the next blow, throwing Slavok off balance and allowing the Cult Guard to regain his feet.

Slavok was impressed. The Cult Guard was putting up a better fight than expected. Or so Slavok thought until the next blow missed. Slavok just stood there and he missed. In disgust, Slavok fired a series of blows at the Cult Guard. He parried them all. He ran through another series of attacks that the Cult

Guard also parried. Enough was enough, this was getting tiring.

The Cult Guard missed with his next two attacks while Slavok regarded him with growing disgust, then the lizardman planted a devastating attack in the human's gut that dropped him with a moan.

The Cult Guard had a surprising amount of loot - sixty gold crowns wasn't unusual, but in a nearby strong box he found a flute carved from teakwood, a chunk of obsidian, a piece of lapis lazuli and an engraved copper bracer. This human had been worth the trouble!

There being only one way out, Slavok kicked open the black door on the other side of the room. Wandering a bit through damp corridors Slavok entered the third pillared vault of his outing, and for a moment thought he'd gone in a circle. When he realized that this room hadn't seen blood spilled recently, he continued cautiously. Not cautiously enough. His heavy, booted foot scraped the dust from the ward before he even suspected another trap. The violent explosion pummeled him. Scraping off the dust and soot, Slavok considered his situation. Hurting badly and out of potions. Practically invulnerable.

He'd go for it.

Just beyond the trapped room, Slavok opened a door to a semi-circular room with a

well in the center of it and a door opposite his own. Standing in front of the door was a Cutthroat Slavok recognized from slumming in Barstow. It was obvious that if Slavok wanted to get out of Marikhold it would have to be through the human before him. Very well...

The two opponents moved rapidly across the floor to clash beside the well. The Cutthroat was moving so fast, in fact, that he was unable to stop in time when Slavok started the fight with a tail whip. The human's legs were hit hard enough to sweep him off his feet and onto his back. As Slavok advanced to finish the upstart off, the Cutthroat grabbed a fistful of dirt and hurled it at the lizardman's face. Enough got through the eye slots of the great helm to momentarily blind Slavok - and allow the Cutthroat to regain his feet.

As Slavok's eyes cleared, the determined human lashed out with his foot - dropping Slavok to the floor. Slavok sprang back to his feet and avoided a second trip. Seeing that this ploy was getting nowhere, the Cutthroat made three quick stabs with the short sword then jumped over another tail whip. Before Slavok could attempt another swing, the fast human had made another three attacks. He then easily deflected a swing from Slavok.

"I'm gonna enjoy killin' you," growled the Cutthroat.

With that he smashed at Slavok with his fist, and missed. Slavok struck forward hitting the human in his unarmored gut with the vicious spikes of his gauntlet. The human's face twisted in a grimace of extreme pain.

"I'll get you for that Slavok," he gasped out before dropping to the ground.

After gathering up the pathetic possessions of the Cutthroat, Slavok continued on only to discover that he had gone in a circle after all. Back to the river entrance again, Slavok stumbled wounded and tired out into the late afternoon sunlight, soon leaving Marikhold and its dangers far behind. After four days of roughing it, the prospect of a lumpy bunk and the cook's you-guess-it omelette seemed like bliss.

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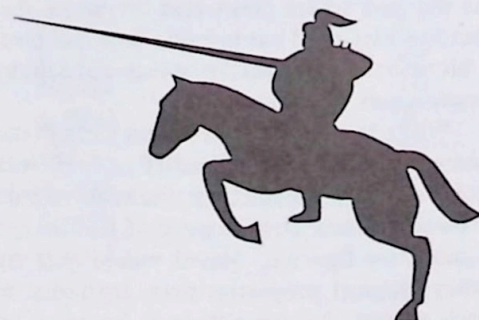
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	COMPANY	RATING	RESPONSE
1	High Point Games	8.555	18
2	Entertainment Plus More, Inc.	8.516	31
3	Simcoarum Systems	8.375	16
4	Sceptre Roleplaying	8.250	16
5	Grandel Inc	8.240	50
6	Agents of Gaming	8.211	45
7	Flying Dutchman Games	8.000	17
8	Rolling Thunder Games	7.750	169
9	Zephyr Enterprises Inc	7.718	16
10	Flying Buffalo Inc	7.505	175
11	Battle-Magic Gaming	7.405	36
12	Graaf Simulations	7.331	110
13	Fantasy & Futuristic Simulations	7.253	15
14	Maelstrom Games	7.250	36
15	Prime Time Simulations	7.228	57
16	Paper Tigers	7.191	24
17	Inner Dimension Games	7.178	14
18	Ark Royal Games	7.041	65
19	Genesis Games Design	7.022	22
20	Advanced Gaming Enterprises	7.007	64
21	Fantasy Workshop	7.000	10
22	Palace Simulations	6.937	16
23	Bronze Star Gaming	6.916	24
24	Game Systems Inc	6.896	125
25	C2 Simulations	6.880	10
26	Deltax Gaming	6.862	29
27	Saul Betesh	6.835	20
28	Classified Information	6.785	14
29	Stand & Deliver	6.725	39
30	Eckert Gaming Group	6.700	20
31	Damien Games	6.545	11
32	Twin Engine Gaming	6.511	43
33	Advent Games	6.409	11
34	HCS Games	6.307	13
35	Midnight Games	6.094	106
36	Adventures By Mail	6.076	156
37	Yellowseed Games	5.315	19
38	Pegasus Productions	4.955	45
39	Fantastic Simulations	4.576	26
40	Reality Simulations Inc	4.542	118
41	JFH Games	4.000	14
42	Infinite Odysseys	3.818	10

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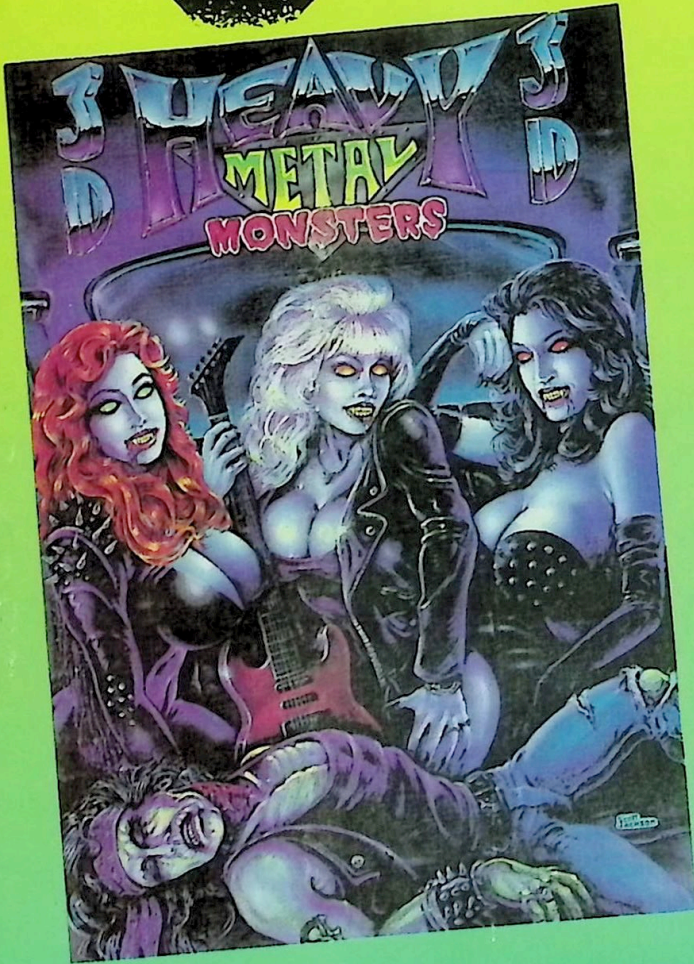
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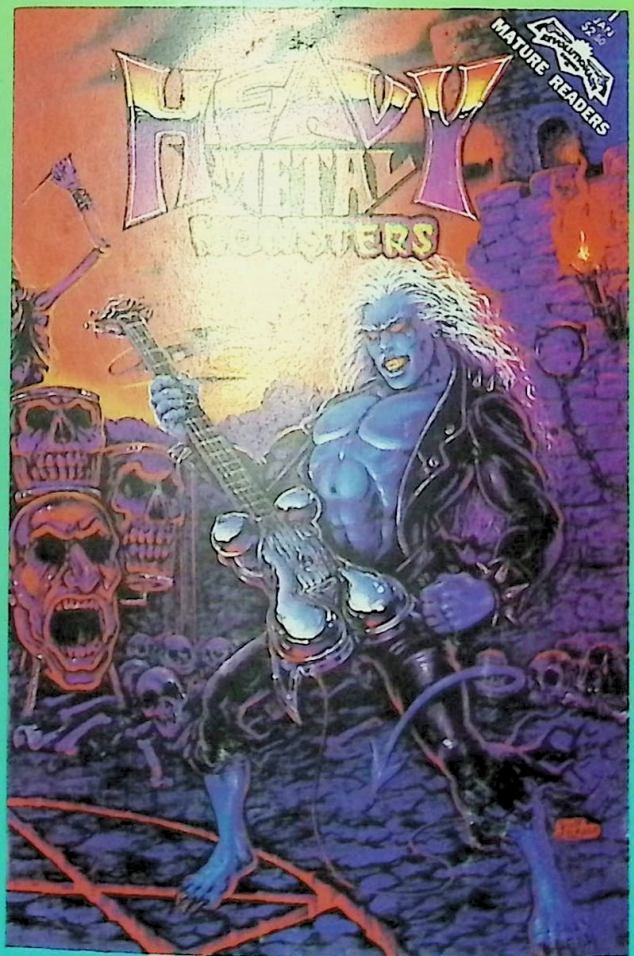
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